



May 3, 2022

Hon. Patrick F. McAllister
Steuben County Supreme Court
3 East Pulteney Square
Bath, NY 14810

Special Master Jonathan Cervas
Steuben County Supreme Court
3 East Pulteney Square
Bath, NY 14810

Dear Justice McAllister and Special Master Cervas,

The Buffalo Jewish Community Relations Council leadership fully support the NYS State Senate District plan that was passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor this year. Specifically, we support the Districts 56, 57, 60, and 63 maps as approved because they maintain communities of interest and correct a partisan gerrymander that exists in the current Senate District map.

The current Senate District 60 includes the Town of Amherst in Erie County and stretches across the New York Thruway (I-90) through rural communities and into the City of Rochester in Monroe County, more than an hour away from Amherst. The current partisan gerrymander intentionally dilutes the voices of Black voters by splitting the City of Rochester into three separate State Senate districts, creating an artificial rural majority between the Town of Amherst and City of Rochester.

The State Senate maps passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor this year will keep communities of interest together, protect the rights of racial and language minorities, and provide fair representation for our communities. The proposed 56th and 57th districts reconnect the City of Rochester and ensure voters of color in the City finally have the opportunity to be represented by someone living in the Greater Rochester area. The 60th Senate District protects communities of interest by connecting residents who live along the Niagara River, including the West Side of the City of Buffalo and the City of Niagara Falls, which share many commonalities. Finally, the 63rd Senate District corrects a blatantly partisan gerrymander, by placing the Town of Amherst, Buffalo's largest suburb, in the same district as the City of Buffalo and the City of Lackawanna.

For these reasons, we urge you to adopt the State Senate District map passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor. This action would undo the 2012 gerrymander that split apart communities of color and disenfranchised Black voters in the City of Rochester. Connecting the Town of Amherst to the City of Buffalo and City of Lackawanna in the 63rd Senate District provides for the representation our communities deserve. Further, the 56th, 57th and 60th Senate Districts follow the state constitutional principles that ensure racial and language minorities are treated fairly, and communities of interest are maintained.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Deborah Goldman".

Deborah Goldman, co-chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mara Koven-Gelman".

Mara Koven-Gelman, director

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