

**TESTIMONY TO THE ALBANY COUNTY REDISTRICTING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING 5PM  
JUNE 30, 2022**

**SUBMITTED BY TERRELL D. RABB, PRESIDENT HUDSON PARK NEIGHBOHOOD ASSOCIATION INC. AND JACKALINE H. RING, PRESIDENT, CENTER SQUARE ASSOCIATION INC.**

To the members of the ACRC and MMD;

Thank you for all your hard work and for this opportunity to provide testimony. Since 1973, Hudson Park Neighborhood Association Inc. (Hudson/Park NA) and Center Square Association, Inc. (CSA) have fostered community and cooperation within our neighborhoods and with adjoining sibling city neighborhoods. Our neighborhoods are, roughly, bounded to the north by Spring Street, to the west by Willet Street, the south by Park Avenue and the east by South Swan.

Hudson/Park NA and CSA along with the Lark Street corridor are part of the community of interest in the City of Albany known in the vernacular as “Center Square”, a community that has been growing since well before 1958. Along with the neighborhoods around Washington Park (and the Washington Park Conservancy), we are one of the most vibrant communities in the City of Albany. Our community regularly hosts annual runs, festivals and events. Naming a few of these would be to name some of the most prominent events in the county, events such as Freihofer’s Run for Women, Albany’s Tulip Fest, various LGBTQ+ Pride celebrations, Art on Lark, the Stoop Stroll, plays from Park Playhouse and concerts at Lark Hall. The final draft plan ([Map D](#)) would break up our shared community of interest into three legislative districts.

While our individual neighborhoods straddle multiple county districts, the Center Square community of interest is wholly within the current District 5 and is also within Ward 6 of the city’s Common Council. Our community and neighborhoods have benefited greatly from the compact and shared focus areas from our representatives, both in the form of support for events and shared support for issues such as walkability. Splitting our community amongst three representatives where two of representatives will have significantly larger areas to cover would likely result in a muting of our voice in the county. Previously proposed Plan A maintained the vast majority of our community in a compact single district while reasonably adjusting boundaries for population growth.

Furthermore, the proposed district lines in Map D, while increasing the physical span of current majority-minority districts 2 and 6, would serve to decrease the percentage of actual minority residents in those districts from current distributions. To illustrate: District 2 currently is 76% minority and 24% white, the initial plan would have maintained that percentage where Map D increased the white population to 40% and decreases the minority population to 60%. District 6 would be similarly affected; it is currently 28% white and Map D would increase the percentage to 40%. While Map D will also add a sixth majority-minority district, it is unclear how decreasing the percentage of minorities in a district and creating a larger area for individuals to campaign in would better serve to elect minority representatives and represent minority interests to the county rather than dilute the minority interests. Note that other parts of Map D would lead to incumbent minority representatives running against each other for a single seat, such as with Districts 2 and 4.

Given shifts in the county’s population, we understand that there has to be modifications to the present districts. We argue that those shifts should be done thoughtfully and in consideration of a number of

factors beyond a mere total number of majority minority districts. We urge you to propose one of the previously proposed Plan A to the legislature.