

# APAVOICE

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS VOTING & ORGANIZING TO INCREASE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



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## PRESS RELEASE

### **APA VOICE Redistricting Task Force Urges Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature to Adopt the Unity Map**

#### **Empower Marginalized Communities and Safeguard Democracy for the Next Ten Years**

This is a defining moment for the new Governor and the New York State Legislature to decide where power lies in New York for the next ten years. With the Independent Redistricting Commission deadlocked, it is now the responsibility of the New York State Legislature to pass and Governor Hochul to sign into law a redistricting plan put forward by its Legislative Task Force on Redistricting and Reapportionment (LATFOR).

The APA VOICE Redistricting Task Force unanimously urges Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature to adopt the Unity Map that accurately reflects the 2020 Census data and the tremendous growth in the Asian population in New York City. Supported by a 43% surge in Asian American population in Brooklyn and 29% increase in Queens, the Unity Map creates the first Asian American majority State Senate District in Brooklyn, the first Asian American majority State Assembly District in Elmhurst and Woodside, keeps Richmond Hill/South Ozone Park mostly whole at all legislative levels, and preserves Manhattan Chinatown/Lower East Side in the same State Senate and State Assembly districts with Lower Manhattan. The Unity Map is the most equitable map for all communities of color that are protected under the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, which also complies with “one person one vote”, and all federal and state redistricting requirements. Link to Unity Map:

[https://newyork.redistrictingandyou.org/?districtType=ad&propA=current\\_2012&propB=unity\\_map\\_20211116&selected=-73.872,40.733#%26map=11.38/40.6291/-74.0137](https://newyork.redistrictingandyou.org/?districtType=ad&propA=current_2012&propB=unity_map_20211116&selected=-73.872,40.733#%26map=11.38/40.6291/-74.0137)



The APA VOICE Redistricting Task Force, with 17 civic engagement organizations, is the largest Asian American coalition actively involved in the 2020 Redistricting Cycle. After input from member orgs of the APA VOICE Redistricting Task Force and Black and Latinx groups on their community neighborhood boundaries, the Unity Coalition drew the Unity Map to keep, where possible, Black, Latinx, and Asian American communities of interest respectively in the same congressional, state, and assembly district. Members of the Unity Coalition include the Center for Law and Social Justice at Medgar Evers College, LatinoJustice PRLDEF, and AALDEF (who is also a member of the Task Force).

“MinKwon Center supports the Unity Map and urges Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature to adopt its borders. APA’s (Asian alone) account for 9.6 % of New York State’s population and 15.8% of New York City’s Population, yet APA elected officials account for less than 5% of state senators and less than 2% of assembly persons. The Unity Map reflects our growth and empowers our communities of interest with a meaningful opportunity to elect a candidate of their choice.” - **John Park, Executive Director, MinKwon Center for Community Action and Convenor of APA VOICE**

#### **City-Wide Member Organizations:**

“The recent Census data shows that the diverse AAPI community continues to be the fastest growing racial group in the state and country. It is critical that our voices and political power are protected in the democratic process. With our community's input into neighborhood boundaries, the Unity Map does just that for AAPI, Black, and Latinx New Yorkers in both Albany and Washington, DC. We ask that Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature support the fair and equitable districts in the Unity Map that empowers our communities.” -**Wayne Ho, President and CEO, Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC)**

“Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature should adopt the Unity Maps in full – they preserve and protect performing districts and the federally protected groups that live in these districts, and reflect the tremendous growth in the Asian American community in New York City, the largest growth of any racial group. The Congressional Unity Map keeps communities whole and together, it maintains and improves CD6 which was drawn by the court, and keeps Asian American communities of interest in Queens together, keeps Manhattan's Chinatown and Brooklyn's Sunset Park together in CD7, and keeps less of Bensonhurst and Sheepshead Bay in the Staten Island district, CD11.” - **Jerry Vattamala, Director of the Democracy Program, Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund**



“AAFE wholeheartedly supports the Unity Map and calls upon the state legislature and Governor Hochul to adopt it. We believe it reflects the fairest and most equitable redistricting plan for all of New York. Although not everyone got everything they wanted through this process, the Unity Map prioritizes communities of interest and the voting rights of our diverse and dynamic neighborhoods.” - **Crystal Feng, Project Manager, Asian Americans for Equality**

“OCA-NY urges Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature to adopt the Unity Map because this map reflects the incredible growth in the AAPI community and empowers communities of color throughout NYC. The Unity Map keeps Chinatown and Lower East Side in one State Senate district, and keeps Sunset Park and Bensonhurst together, giving these communities an opportunity to elect candidates of their choice. Now more than ever, we need to keep our communities together so we receive our fair share of funding to fight against hate crimes, provide social services for our elders and make sure AAPI businesses bounce back from the pandemic.” - **Bri Cea, President, OCA-NY Asian American Advocates**

#### **Brooklyn Member Organizations:**

“The Academy of Medical & Public Health Services stands in support of the Unity Map developed by the Unity Map Coalition. As a public health organization serving a majority Asian and Latino community, we believe that the Unity Map best represents a shared goal among our diverse communities to have a fair and equitable redistricting process that uplifts our voices and enables representation of our interests and needs. We urge Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature to adopt the Unity Map.” - **Mon Yuck Yu, Executive Vice President and Chief of Staff, Academy of Medical and Public Health Services**

“Homecrest Community Services supports the Unity Map because it does a phenomenal job of keeping APA communities of interest together while keeping other communities intact. A good example is Sheepshead Bay is now kept whole in the same Assembly District, rather than split into three. This way our votes matter. We urge Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature to adopt the Unity Map.” - **Kay Wong, Outreach Coordinator, Homecrest Community Services**



### **Queens Member Organizations:**

"CHHAYA urges Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature to reflect the 2020 census data and empower growing communities by adopting the Unity Map. The Unity Map is a culmination of months of research and community engagement with key stakeholders, including the APA VOICE Redistricting Task Force, and extensive discussion and compromise between different groups protected by the Voting Rights Act. The Unity Map provides the best opportunity for immigrant and working class communities who have historically been separated and denied representation and access, to finally be reflected in their voting districts. Given the 29% increase of the APA population in Queens as shown by the 2020 Census, Jackson Heights, Elmhurst, and Woodside finally have the chance to be an Asian majority assembly district ." - **Rekha Malhotra, Interim Chief of Staff, CHHAYA CDC**

"We urge Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature to keep Little Manila whole by adopting the Unity Map. The NYChapter of National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA-NY) goal is to keep the Little Manila community in Woodside, Queens as whole as possible on all legislative levels and we believe the Unity Map best achieves this. In the past decade, Little Manila has been divided between at least three State Assembly districts which diluted our voice and power to protect our community. With the Unity Map, multiple generations of Filipino Americans thriving in Little Manila can be full participants in the democratic process.' - **Rachelle Ocampo, New York State Chairperson, National Federation of Filipino American Associations**

"We urge Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature to listen to the voices of marginalized communities protected by the Voting Rights Act. Little Manila Queens Bayanihan Arts supports the Unity Map, because it not only amplifies the Filipino American voice by keeping Little Manila together, but also ensures the same for Black, Latino, and other Asian American communities of interest." - **Jacqueline Reyes, Community Organizer, Little Manila Queens Bayani Arts**

"Korean Community Services (KCS) expresses strong support for the Unity Map. This map keeps our constituents from Flushing, Auburndale/Bayside, and Oakland



Gardens whole to the extent possible at all legislative levels. It is the most equitable plan for communities of color in NYC. The Unity Map allows our community to have an equal opportunity to elect candidates of our choice." **Kevin Cho, Acting Director, Korean Community Services**

"It is SACSS' mission to provide vital services to the underserved South Asian and other immigrant communities living in NYC. As part of APA VOICE Redistricting Task Force, we have always advocated for 'Keeping communities together'. The Unity Map is a major step towards making sure that communities of color are strongly represented in the redistricting process. We urge Governor Hochul and The New York State Legislature to keep our communities together by adopting the Unity Map." - **Sudha Acharya, Executive Director, South Asian Council for Social Services (SACSS)**

"The Caribbean Equality Project urges Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature to adopt the UNITY map. Equity and justice for Richmond Hill/South Ozone Park and Ozone Park are LONG overdue. The Unity map keeps our neighborhoods and communities of interest in Richmond Hill/South Ozone Park and Ozone Park intact with established common interests that are grounded in historical, racial, cultural, economic, ethnic, and religious ties. It's time to end this cycle of gerrymandering and give us a fighting chance to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic as a more politically resilient community." - **Mohamed Q. Amin, founder and Executive Director, Caribbean Equality Project**

"South Queens Women's March urges Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature to adopt the Unity Map to prevent Richmond Hill/South Ozone Park and Ozone Park from being unfairly divided into multiple districts for another 10 years. The Unity Map at all levels of government will more accurately reflect Asian American communities of interest while also preserving the political power of the Black and Latinx communities. SQWM supports keeping Richmond Hill/South Ozone Park and Ozone Park whole. This is about equity for Asian Americans in Queens - a population that has grown larger than any other racial group per the last Census." - **Aminta Kilawan-Narine, Founder & Director, South Queens Women's March**

"Shetu Inc. supports the Unity Map of Richmond Hill/South Ozone Park. This community of interest has faced inequality and injustice for far too long. We urge Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature to "right the wrong" and keep them whole. For the sake of fairness and equality, it should be kept together so that



the existing community can continue to share and build common interests and values.” - **Tirtho Dutta, Program Coordinator, Shetu, Inc.**

“The communities that live along Hillside Avenue in eastern Queens support the Unity Map. For the past year, the community has asked to keep our communities together in the redistricting process. The Unity Map is the best manifestation of the hopes of our neighborhoods for empowerment. We ask that the legislature pass the Unity Map lines and the Governor sign them into law.” - **John Albert, Founder and Director, Taking Our Seat**

#### **Manhattan Member Organizations:**

“We urge Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature to protect the longstanding community of interest between Manhattan’s Chinatown and the Lower East Side. For years we have served residents of Chinatown and the Lower East Side. The Asian, Latino, black and other residents in this area have common concerns, use the same services, work in the same businesses, and the children go to the same schools. Throughout the years, Chinatown and the Lower East Side have remained a community of interest. It must be in the same district at all levels of government. This is recognized in the Unity Map.”- **Mae Lee, Executive Director, Chinese Progressive Association**

