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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### A Critical Westchester County Concern and Call to Action

New York's Independent Redistricting Committee (IRC) was charged with redrawing New York's Congressional, State Senate, and State Assembly district maps. On January 3, 2022, the IRC presented the state legislature with two sets of redrawn district maps – one set produced by the IRC's Democratic members, the other by its Republican members. Not for the first time, a split directly along party lines in what was designed to be a non-partisan, collective endeavor. The legislature rejected both sets of maps and sent them back to the IRC for their final allowable draft. The IRC has until the end of February to re-submit one set - or, if collaboration remains unattainable, two sets - to the legislature which will either approve of one or reject both and draw its own maps.

From Kathy Meany, LWVW President: "The Independent Redistricting Commission has NOT done its job in accordance with a 2014 amendment to the NYS Constitution approved by voters, has wasted taxpayers dollars (\$4 million budget), and the time of voters and legislators. The redistricting process in Westchester County has been a political shame and a huge disappointment to our community. There is limited time left for voters to express their opinions and provide feedback to the IRC and NYS Legislators."

Let's now set aside the IRC's failure to expunge politics and create a single set of maps. Let's also set aside, for the time being, the Senate and Assembly maps. Let's focus on the Congressional district maps the IRC sent the Legislature, now being revised. At least one of those maps does Westchester no favors: it proposes a new District 14 that joins New Rochelle, Larchmont, parts of Mamaroneck Town, the Village of Mamaroneck, the Village of Pelham and Pelham Manor to parts of the Bronx and Queens. In other words, the single Representative serving large parts of the Bronx and Queens will also be serving these six Westchester areas. Query: How does one Representative adequately serve the diverse interests of urban New York City and suburban Westchester – the different school systems, public transportation, highways, taxation, park systems, and waterfronts, for starters. The situation almost evokes sympathy for the Representative and staff who must now thoroughly learn the laws, regulations and politics governing THREE counties in order to competently do the job. The current official Congressional map has, for the last ten years, diluted Westchester votes by joining certain parts of Westchester with the Bronx. Throw in Queens and every Westchester vote in that new district loses more strength and meaning.

**So What Can You Do?** Together we can flood IRC and State Legislature inboxes with hundreds – no, thousands – of emails as soon as possible. We do not know when the IRC will complete its revisions. It could be this week. Please consider doing it right after you've read this – it will take 10 minutes. A simple, brief, respectful model letter is below for you to email to the IRC and NYS Legislators.

<https://nyirc.gov/participate>

<https://www.nysenate.gov/senators-committees>

<https://nyassembly.gov/mem/>

Sample Letter:

**Dear Members of the Independent Redistricting Commission and New York State Legislature:**

I am a concerned citizen of Westchester County who feels strongly that the state's next Congressional District map should not join portions of Westchester to the Bronx and Queens. I do not believe that a single Representative can adequately represent the diverse interests of three counties in a conglomeration of urban New York City and suburban Westchester as drawn in Plans A and B for District 14. I understand that the task of map drawing has been difficult for the Commission and continues to be, but I do not want the Commission to dilute any Westchester votes in this manner, and for the next ten years. This same request was expressed by most speakers who were asked about it at the White Plains public hearing.

Thank you. [Name]

The League of Women Voters of Westchester is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization that advocates for issues and educates the public to empower voters and defend democracy. Let your voice be heard!

Submitted by:

Kathy Meany, President  
League of Women Voters of Westchester

Redistricting Committee  
League of Women Voters of Westchester