

Testimony for Connecticut Reapportionment Committee, September 2021

Submitted 09/11/2021 via email to reapportionment@cga.ct.gov

From: Elsa Peterson Obuchowski, 41 East Ave., Norwalk, CT 06851

I would like to make a specific case of Norwalk’s state House districts 140 and 141.

The 140th is heavily Democratic and the 141st is heavily Republican – so much so that the Democratic and Republican incumbents in these districts have often run unopposed. These two districts are adjacent to each other. Geographically it should not be too difficult to shift some voters between the two to make them both more competitive. I understand there is an argument in favor of “communities of interest,” but in this case that argument weighs toward “safe” blue and red districts to the point of what I would consider “packing.”

When we have a candidate from one party running unopposed or with a very weak challenger, as the State Reps for both the 140th and 141st have done time after time, that constitutes voter suppression. People figure they know who’s going to win, so they don’t bother voting. As a result, no votes are cast for all the other candidates on the ballot—from President of the United States to U.S. Senate, to U.S. House, to Governor, to State Senate. District lines should not be about incumbent protection; they should give voters a choice.

I ask that the Reapportionment Committee please reconfigure the 140th and 141st state House districts to make them more competitive.

Thank you for your consideration.
