

# State legislative redistricting hearing held at Queens Borough Hall



Former president of the Organization of Chinese Americans, New York Chapter Jerry Cheng testifying at the hearing (photo provided by the Organization of Chinese Americans)

(Epoch Times September 8, 2011) (Reported by Epoch Times reporter Guohui DU, from New York) On September 7, New York State Legislative Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment held a public hearing at Queens Borough Hall on the redrawing of election districts. State Senate Chairman Michael F. Nozzolio, State Assembly Chairman John J. McEneny and other members of the task force were all in attendance. Because the Borough of Queens is involved, numerous Asian-American community organizations and individuals were in attendance and gave testimonies, and it was quite a lively scene.

Asian American Bar Association of New York Executive Director Yang Chen stated that, as a professional association that champions and protects the rights of Asian Americans and develop the careers of Asian American attorneys, AABANY believes that the redrawn districts should not divide contiguous communities. Not only should existing communities be preserved, the contiguity of emerging communities must also be

protected. The current District 22 is an example, and that [he] would like to see the senate election districts and other districts redrawn in the same manner.

Former president of the Organization of Chinese Americans, New York Chapter Jerry Cheng stated in testimony that, because the organization is one of volunteers, it has no funding to be applied towards diagrams, but that the organization believes that the current assembly election district 22 may stay as is, and the Bayside area – currently divided between election districts 24 and 26 – should be combined with the neighboring Auburndale and Murrary Hill neighborhoods into a new election district, because of their highly similar socio-economic data. Flushing is currently divided into two state senate election districts: 11 and 16. The Organization of Chinese Americans supports the creation of a new senate election district, combining Flushing with Auburndale, Murrary Hill, and Bayside, because of their highly similar socio-economic data.

James Hong of the Minkwon Center stated that most of the current election districts divide communities, particularly the federal house of representatives election districts. This problem exists in Queens, Brooklyn, as well as Manhattan.

Asian American Legal Defense Education Fund attorney Jerry Vattamala said that, based on the 2010 population census, the Asian-American population in Queens has grown by 30.6%, but that the Asian-American communities are among the most underrepresented communities.