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**CONTACT**

[Aries Dela Cruz](#), 347-683-3020

[Dick Dadey](#), 917-709-2896

## **Citizens Union Calls on City Districting Commission to Rescind Maps**

*Good Government Group Concerned Over Flawed Process,  
Tainted Decision on District 34, and Need for More Public Input*

Dick Dadey, executive director of Citizens Union, this afternoon released the following statement:


"Citizens Union is concerned about the flawed process currently in play over the Council's review of the submitted council district maps and the need for additional public comment. It is even more disturbed about the reports that the City Districting Commission adjusted one council district to advantage Assemblymember Vito Lopez at the backroom request of a political ally. We are additionally concerned that the maps seem to protect incumbents at the expense of better reflecting the significant input received from the public to create fairer districts which address the changed demographics of the city.

"Citizens Union consequently feels that additional public input and further changes are needed, which is why we call upon the Commission to rescind its original proposal at its public meeting tomorrow. Though we believe that the preferred route is for the Council to formally reject the maps via a public vote as required by the City Charter, the Council appears not to be able to muster the needed votes to do so given how well incumbents have done under these maps. While the action of withdrawing the maps is not expressly provided for in the City Charter, it is not prohibited. In the interest of maps that will better represent all of New York's communities, we support withdrawal of the proposed maps so that additional hearings can be held.

"The independence of the process and public confidence in the fairness of the Commission's decisions have been undermined by the change in council district 34 lines that was reportedly made as a result of a private conversation between Councilmember Erik Martin Dilan and the Commission. This private request was granted without the benefit of public scrutiny, and on its face calls into question the conduct of the commission's work if it can be influenced by one elected official's unwarranted private request. Citizens Union calls on the Commission to undo this change to no longer include Assemblymember Vito Lopez's residence in the district, as no district should be tailored to any one individual – notwithstanding case precedent regarding consideration of incumbency – particularly someone who has violated the public's trust as has Assemblymember Lopez. Further, new public

hearings will provide the public with a chance to comment on other changes to the districts as to whether or not they adequately address concerns raised at public hearings.

Citizens Union calls on the Commission to expedite its proceedings while maximizing public participation in the process, holding public hearings as soon as possible so that it may provide the Council with revised maps later this month, with the Council voting on the revised maps no later than mid-January. The withdrawal of maps should not provide the opportunity for substantial delays, so that candidates for office can know the boundaries of districts lines and that the public can have greater choices at the ballot box."



[Citizens Union](#) is a nonpartisan good government group dedicated to making democracy work for all New Yorkers. Citizens Union serves as a civic watchdog, combating corruption and fighting for political reform. We work to ensure fair and open elections, honest and efficient government, and a civically-engaged public.

299 Broadway, Suite 700 | New York, NY 10007 US