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Kathy Hochul, Governor, State of New York
Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Majority Leader, New York State Senate
Carl Heastie, Speaker, New York State Assembly

11/20/2026

RE: Opposition to Second Passage of the Redistricting Constitutional Amendment

Dear Governor Hochul, Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, and Speaker Heastie:

We write to urge you not to pass again S10637/A11553, the proposed redistricting constitutional amendment, when the new Legislature convenes in January.

When the amendment first passed in June 2026, its proponents argued that New York could not unilaterally limit itself while Republican-led states redrew their maps mid-decade. The midterm election has changed that reality. Mid-decade gerrymanders in other states largely failed to deliver. There is no need to take part in a national redistricting arms race or “fight fire with fire,” as Speaker Heastie recently said. Other states have reconsidered their approach in light of the election results, and New York should not engage in late-decade changes or encourage future mid-decade redistricting.

The proposed amendment is deeply flawed. It permanently rewrites the rules for every congressional, State Senate, and Assembly district, during mid-decade redraws and the regular ten-year cycle alike. It repeals the constitutional ban on drawing districts to favor parties or protect incumbents, eliminates compactness requirements and protections for counties, cities, and towns, and downgrades the remaining criteria to factors that merely receive "consideration." It weakens protections for voters of color by replacing the results test for evaluating districts, making it much harder to challenge maps that dilute minority voters’ strength. It lets lawmakers redraw lines before any election, with no requirement that another state act first and no sunset.

It is also opposed by voters across parties and ideology: a June Siena poll found that only 21 percent of voters supported the amendment, while 44 percent opposed it. Pluralities of Democrats and independents, and a majority of Republicans, said the amendment is “bad for New York.” We have already seen one attempt to re-write the state constitutional provision governing redistricting go down to resounding defeat and urge you to learn from that experience.

Given these realities, there is no reason to act on a constitutional amendment that redistricts mid-cycle. New York's redistricting process does need reform, but this proposal is not the answer.

We urge you not to bring S10637/A11553 back for second passage or take further action to facilitate mid-cycle redistricting, and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss a better path forward with you and your staff.

Sincerely,

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