



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
PRESS STATEMENT**

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Unity Coalition Applauds NYS Legislature’s Rejection of IRC Plans and Calls for Full Adoption of Unity Map For NYC

NEW YORK — New York’s Independent Redistricting Commission (IRC) has failed New Yorkers by proving themselves incapable of rising above partisan political squabbling to create a fair, nonpartisan redistricting plan. During New York’s inaugural redistricting cycle under the misnamed Independent Redistricting Commission (it’s not independent and its decisions aren’t binding), the Commission deadlocked along partisan political lines and failed to support a single set of legislative maps for New York State. Of great consequence to communities of color, the dueling IRC redistricting plans submitted to and rejected by the New York State Legislature yesterday don’t reflect the voting strength of New York City’s Latino, Black and Asian communities which form the backbone (and majority) of our City. While we commend the public input garnered, the lack of a single, non-partisan proposed redistricting plan that complies with the Voting Rights Act and the strictures of New York’s redistricting process is unacceptable and an abject failure.

New York needs a single unified redistricting plan which equitably benefits the interests of all New Yorkers, especially New York’s historically marginalized communities of color. New York City’s Black, Asian and Latino communities have for decades been irreparably harmed by electoral districts and voting laws that were enacted with the intent of our exclusion and the diminution of our voting power. Our communities have suffered from decades of gerrymandering which rigged the electoral system against us — diminishing our electoral power and neglecting our communities. In New York City, our communities have been historically divided and under-resourced. For generations we’ve suffered the consequences of underperforming

schools, crumbling roads and hospitals, underfunded infrastructure, gentrification, limited access to quality food and healthcare, increased toxic pollution, and a myriad of other problems.

We call on the IRC to adopt the Unity Map for New York City in its entirety. While the IRC Commissioners seek to cast blame, New Yorkers are left with a broken redistricting process. The sole bright spot of the redistricting process has been the overwhelming engagement of New Yorkers in the process and their advocacy on behalf of their communities. Throughout the redistricting process, there has been broad, sustained and unwavering support for the Unity Map from diverse stakeholders.

While the redistricting process was tied up in partisan wrangling, the Unity Map was driven by non-partisan collaboration between New York City's preeminent Black, Asian and Latino voting and civil rights organizations. Instead of focusing on partisan advantage, our singular focus has been ensuring the City's communities of color receive their fair proportion of voting power and electoral representation without reverting to a zero-sum political process whereby communities of color are pitted against one another. We understand that our strength lies in solidarity, recognizing and mapping for demographic growth and unification of historically divided communities of interest the Unity Map is superior to the rejected partisan IRC districting plans and should be adopted in full for New York City. The public's steadfast support for the Unity Map must guide and inform any new districts adopted.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

- **UNITY MAP:** [Assembly Districts](#) / [Senate Districts](#) / [Congressional Districts](#)
- [UNITY Map Coalition Efforts](#)

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About the UNITY MAP COALITION

The Coalition has been at the forefront of nonpartisan redistricting to protect communities of color for the last three decades. During the last Redistricting cycle in 2010-11, the Coalition successfully advocated for the adoption of its historic Unity Map for the 2010 Redistricting Congressional districts in NYC, the State Senate and Assembly, and the New York City Council. This Coalition rewrote redistricting history in NYS and serves as a model for the nation of collective advocacy and power sharing by diverse racial and cultural communities within a jurisdiction.

About The Center For Law And Social Justice At Medgar Evers College

The mission of the Center for Law and Social Justice at Medgar Evers College is to address racial justice issues by providing quality legal advocacy, conducting community education campaigns, facilitating research and building organizing capacity on behalf of New Yorkers of African descent and the disenfranchised. To learn more about CLSJ visit www.CLSJ.org.

About LatinoJustice

LatinoJustice PRLDEF works to create a more just society by using and challenging the rule of law to secure transformative, equitable and accessible justice, by empowering our community and by fostering leadership through advocacy and education. For nearly 50 years, LatinoJustice PRLDEF has acted as an

advocate against injustices throughout the country. To learn more about LatinoJustice, visit www.LatinoJustice.org.

About AALDEF

The Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF), a New York-based national organization founded in 1974, protects and promotes the civil rights of Asian Americans. By combining litigation, advocacy, education, and organizing, AALDEF works with Asian American communities across the country to secure human rights for all. AALDEF focuses on critical issues affecting Asian Americans, including immigrant rights, voting rights and democracy, economic justice for workers, educational equity, housing and environmental justice, and the elimination of anti-Asian violence. To learn more about AALDEF, visit www.aaldef.org.