

To the Rhode Island Special Commission on Reapportionment,

In Opposition to any Plan that divides the Town of East Greenwich into separate House Districts

To the Commission:

A community of interest is a community with common policy concerns which benefits from representation in a single House District. These communities of interest are defined both by what neighbors share in common and by what is unique and distinctive in comparison to surrounding communities.

For East Greenwich, much of our shared identity derives from the reputation our public schools and the centrality of education to our civic life. Our schools are a crown jewel of the town, and it is critical to ensure that our state representation continues to encompass the entirety of our school community.

The proposed redistricting maps, "House Plan B" and "House Plan C," carve away a portion of our school community in a way that does serious harm to both individual citizens and to the entire town. Under House Plans B and C, the population removed from district would include many of our most vulnerable residents and students. School funding, curriculum, facilities, and special programs aimed at assisting our most vulnerable students are regularly impacted by the actions of the General Assembly, and our already small town would have its position undermined further on vital issues through the dilution of our state representation.

In addition to being harmful to our school community, the proposed re-drawing of district lines along Main Street in East Greenwich harkens back to an ugly chapter in our town's history, when a thriving African American community on the waterfront, Scaloptown, was kept segregated for decades, then redlined and ultimately demolished.

As volunteers dedicated to our unique and vital community, and as elected officials who support the schools every day, we ask that House Plans B and C be removed from consideration for redistricting.

Thank you.

Alyson Powell, Vice Chair
Tim Munoz, Member
East Greenwich School Committee