

Good evening and thank you to the members of this commission. I appreciate the work that you do and realize that this is not an easy task. My name is Renu Englehart and I am a member of the East Greenwich Town Council. Like my colleagues here tonight, I am here to voice my dismay at the potential split of the Hill & Harbor area of East Greenwich in the RI House of Representatives for District 30.

The Hill & Harbor has been a settled single district since its inception over 250 yrs ago. It is the main center of East Greenwich and has been its whole history.. Many of the issues facing the Hill & Harbor currently are in its entirety. Those issues are time intense and require a thorough knowledge of our town. The Commission's directive "shall reflect natural, historical, geographical, municipal and other political lines and communities of interest, as well as the right of all Rhode Islanders to fair representation and equal access to the political process." To carve out the Harbor from District 30 in the RI House and to give it District 24, which is majority Warwick, is beneficial to whom exactly? How exactly will this help the town of East Greenwich to have this small but very important part of our town represented by someone with no vested interest and no knowledge of our current town issues? I fail to see how separating this old and locally significant district will help.

How does splitting towns like this help any municipality? It is not easier for the councils or other local bodies to try to explain issues to two reps especially when one representative may have the bulk of the municipality and the other a sliver. I highly doubt that each representative looks at the minor part of their district with the same consistency as that that makes up the majority. East Greenwich is already somewhat split in the RI Senate. Although I like both senators equally, I know that the senator for whom East Greenwich is a major part of her district gives it far more time than the senator for whom East Greenwich only represents a minor part of his. I think having a single representative for most towns without splitting up or separating would be far more beneficial to most municipalities with exception of the larger, urban areas. Splitting towns for the RI House does not give residents equal representation in the GA, it advantages the representatives themselves.

East Greenwich is growing rapidly and we have pending building applications. I cannot think of any reason why the Commission would add to District 30 part of West Greenwich that has no common interests with the larger area. We share no services with West Greenwich and have different issues. Once again, whose interests are being safeguarded?

In closing I ask that you keep RI House District 30 from losing the Harbor area, this does not benefit the residents of the Harbor nor does it benefit the town as a whole. I do not believe this treats all residents equally despite the claim that it will.

Thank you and thank you once again for the opportunity to make this statement. This statement has been emailed to the Commission.