



## The National Association For The Advancement of Colored People Metropolitan Council

Good evening, my name is Kenneth D. Cohen, Regional Director of the NAACP NYS Conference Metropolitan Council. I bring you greetings from our New York State Conference President Dr. Hazel N. Dukes. As most of you should know the NAACP was founded right here in New York City in 1909, since that time the NAACP has shown a great interest in the election process and representation of the people in this great nation, especially in this great City of New York.

Not only has the NAACP fought against segregation and prejudice, not only has the NAACP opened the doors for good health services, quality housing, employment, fair and equal education, but the NAACP fought so the many people in this room could vote and participate in this process as the NAACP continues the struggle for voters rights against all odds and tricks. The NAACP understands the long battle, which cost the lives of many great leaders, to get to today's hearing. Although this is the third hearing of five, that will conclude at the end of this week. The next phase in this process will start shortly, our members have been present, observing, and monitoring these hearings so we can make an analyst of these proceedings to make a presentation that will represent the diversity of this City and not forget the long hard battles to for representation of the diversity of New York City on the New York City Council. We must know the past to move into the future and the New York City Council in their first one hundred years did not reflect the entire City of New York until the first African American Adam Clayton Powell was elected in 1941, then a slow progression of great African American Council members, until the first Latina, Nydia Velasquez was elected in

1984. It was not until 1989 when we saw the number of Council members increase to its current number of 51 that we saw a drastic change in its diverse representation. Although today the New York City Council has a diversity with the election of the first Asian John Liu to the City Council with Margaret Chen and Peter Koo becoming elected New York City members. The NAACP will remain diligent in its efforts for equal representation as the NAACP in its 103 years watchdog group that opened doors for all.

At the beginning of 2012 the process for District lines started with the selection and appointment of this body of individuals representing this great city and charged with fairly reviewing current New York City Council lines, holding hearings, then making positively sure that the people of New York City can be represented fairly.