



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins & Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie Announce Joint Legislative Hearing on Independent Redistricting

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Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie today announced that the Legislative Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment (LATFOR), Senate Judiciary Committee and Assembly Government Operations Committee will hold a joint legislative hearing on Wednesday, July 15 to evaluate the 2014 constitutional amendments providing for independent redistricting in advance of the first redistricting

process since their enactment.

The hearing will be conducted by the LATFOR chairs Senate Deputy Majority Leader Michael Gianaris and Assemblymember Robert J. Rodriguez, in conjunction with the Senate Judiciary Committee, chaired by Senator Brad Hoylman, and the Assembly Governmental Operations Committee, chaired by Assemblymember Kenneth Zebrowski. Invited participants will include good-government advocates and other experts. The hearing will be livestreamed on the Senate and Assembly websites.

“How district lines are drawn is crucial to ensure our democracy functions properly and serves all people. For too long, redistricting has been a partisan game that has polarized our country,” said **Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins**. “As we approach the next redistricting, it is crucial that we establish a process focused on fairness. This hearing is an important first step to finally achieving this important principle. I thank Speaker Carl Heastie for his partnership, and my Senate Democratic Majority colleagues, Deputy Leader Gianaris and Senator Hoylman, for leading this important hearing.”

“Next year, decisions will be made that will determine the course of New Yorkers’ representation at the state and federal level for the next decade,” **Speaker Heastie** said. “New Yorkers deserve a redistricting process that is transparent and non-partisan. This hearing, and the testimony gathered from experts by my Assembly and Senate colleagues, will ensure that this process begins on the right foot – in an open, transparent and independent manner. Thank you to Assemblymember Rodriguez and Assemblymember Zebrowski for their hard work and dedication on this.”

“Once-in-a-decade critical decisions will soon be made on how best to adjust political boundaries,” said **New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) Director Blair Horner**.

“This public discussion will kick off how fairly and independently that process will work.

NYPIRG applauds the Legislature for taking this first step.”

“The League has long called for a transparent and non-partisan apportionment process that would allow for ample citizen input. Although the delivery of final census counts may be delayed, we believe that citizen participation in New York State’s first ever redistricting commission should begin sooner than later to ensure equitable representation,” said **League of Women Voters of New York State Deputy Director Jennifer Wilson**. “This hearing will allow groups representing diverse communities throughout New York State to offer recommendations for best practices to our new redistricting process. We applaud the Senate and Assembly Majority for holding this hearing in advance of 2021.”