



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Palumbo: The Redistricting Conundrum

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There is an overwhelming sense of frustration with both state and national politics. It seems time and again efforts to work in a collegial and bi-partisan manner are thwarted in the name of maintaining party control. This is not why we as representatives were elected by our constituents. We were elected to ensure the needs of our region are met and that our area of the state has a strong voice in Albany. It is also not the way I, nor my colleagues on the East End, chose to legislate. We work across party lines to get results. We believe in local control and work with all levels of government to pass sound legislation and secure much needed funding for Eastern Long Island.

Last week, after a bi- partisan redistricting committee, approved by the voters of NY State, failed to reach agreement on new Legislative District lines, that task was passed on to the Legislature. As democrats control

both houses of the Legislature and the Governor's office, legislative maps were drawn to strengthen their members' districts. I believe the new lines fail to reflect what residents of this state demanded in passing the referendum to create a bi- partisan redistricting committee. We now have Congressional Districts that meander through five counties and cross city bridges, splintering communities, ethnic groups, counties, and school districts. These new lines are currently being challenged in court.

Now more than ever, we need common sense solutions that come from the middle and are not dictated by the extremes. One party rule in Albany has consistently shifted the state's policies toward a city centric agenda and moved the balance of power away from the suburbs. This is not lost on residents. New York leads the nation in outmigration, with more and more residents fleeing their homes in search of better opportunities, more freedom, and lower taxes. Thankfully, many New Yorkers are staying and are willing to fight for a better future. Like them, I am not willing to give up on the place where I grew up and am raising my family. As your Senator, I will continue my fight to bring balance back to Albany and focus on issues and concerns that matter most to the residents and families I represent.

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