

Public Meetings on
“Proposed Redistricting Goals, Criteria and Reforms”

**NYS Legislative Task Force On Demographic Research
And Reapportionment (LATFOR)
Senator Martin Malave Dilan, Co-Chair
Senate Hrng Rm., 250 Broadway, New York City, Dec. 14, 2010
Hearing Room A, LOB, Albany, NY, Dec. 16, 2010**

**Opening Remarks
Dr. John Flateau, Member, NYS LATFOR**

**Thank you Mr. Chairman, Senator Dilan, for your
outstanding leadership as Co-Chair of the NYS Legislative
Task Force On Demographic Research and Reapportionment,
also known as “LATFOR.” Your earlier leadership of a series
of Roundtable Discussions with a wide array of stakeholders
in the Redistricting process; and your present convening of
Upstate and Downstate Public Meetings on redistricting this
early in the process, is unprecedented.**

It demonstrates your commitment and that of the Senate Majority Conference to openness, transparency, public access and input in New York's congressional and state legislative redistricting. This process will facilitate political representation of the people's voice in New York's democracy and public policy making arenas, which is a fundamental and critical ingredient in moving us forward in these very challenging times for the Empire State and for our nation.

I am serving on my third redistricting commission, both legislative and independent bodies; and I'm touching on my sixth redistricting cycle. Only in America, could a descendant of Africans in America, slave and free, help bring successful voting rights lawsuits against New York City and State Redistricting bodies to increase minority representation; and later be appointed to serve on these bodies. Senator, you and

the Majority Conference played a major role, and I served as team leader to ensure that New Yorkers had an improved participation rate in the 2010 Census. And now the results for congressional reapportionment, State populations, the American Community Survey and other important data are being released to guide Redistricting and other efforts.

Today, I look forward to listening to the people's voice, opinions and expertise on important questions including:

1) What should be the proposed criteria, along with the US Voting Rights Act and federal and state law, to be used in redistricting ?

2) What are some of New York's demographic trends that should be taken into account and impact upon redistricting ?

3) How will New York's pioneering Prisoner Count Law enhance the voting rights of minorities, particularly in the

Bronx, Manhattan and Brooklyn, Counties covered by the Voting Rights Act ? (Note: This law requires preclearance by the US Justice Department); and

4) What are key recommendations to reform the redistricting process?

Thank you Mr. Chairman, State Senators and members of the public, who have taken time out of your busy schedules to participate in this crucial exercise in democracy. Let this important public conversation begin. Thank you.