



November 4, 2021

TESTIMONY FROM DUPONT CIRCLE CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

RE: Redistricting

TO: Subcommittee on Redistricting: Chair Elissa Silverman, Councilmembers Anita Bonds and Christina Henderson

The Dupont Circle Citizens Association (DCCA) thanks the subcommittee for the opportunity to testify on this matter. We are gravely concerned that all three discussion maps move a portion of northeast Dupont Circle neighborhood from Ward 2 to Ward 1. Many members of DCCA reside in this area, and they all are opposed to this change for a variety of reasons, which they have, or will communicate to you separately. To be brief, DCCA's testimony will cover the most salient of these concerns and the specific effects of the proposed map changes on our organization.

The proposed map changes for Dupont will have little effect on four of the subcommittee's six principles of redistricting. However, they will have a negative effect on the principles of "keeping communities of interest together" and "ward continuity and stability."

DCCA was established in 1922. Although the defined boundaries of the association at that time are unclear, in 1969 DCCA filed a Certificate of Incorporation defining our northern boundary as being from 15th Street and Florida Avenue and extending west on Florida to S Street just past Connecticut Avenue and then on S Street to Massachusetts Avenue. In 2001, when the square between 14th and 15th and S and U was added to Ward 2, it was incorporated into DCCA's boundary. As such, DCCA has been almost entirely within Ward 2 for the past 20 years, except for a small portion in Ward 1 between U and Florida Avenues.

Residents of Dupont between S and U Streets, including many members of DCCA (including five of our current Board of Directors), identify with the Dupont Circle neighborhood. This identity is based, among other things on shared values of historic preservation, volunteerism to improve our parks and environment, and alliance with the traditional home of DC's LGBTQ+ community. In fact, your subcommittee's discussion maps document acknowledges that the area south of U street identifies more with Dupont Circle.

Although DCCA, unlike an ANC, could maintain our current boundaries with membership split between two wards, this may be impractical and force us to change our northern border. As a community organization, DCCA has standing to protest liquor licenses, and we have been involved in important historic preservation and transportation cases. For these activities and others, we have traditionally worked with the ANCs, mostly ANC 2B. If a large portion of our northern area were moved to Ward 1, the effort of working with a Ward 1 ANC and Councilmember on such issues would be substantial.

Furthermore, if we changed our association boundaries, we would need to give up our work planting and maintaining the T Street Park and other small gardens north of S Street.

For these reasons, and many others articulated by Dupont Circle residents and ANC Commissioners, we urge you to keep the boundary between Wards 1 and 2 as is.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Volman, President
Dupont Circle Citizens Association
president@dupont-circle.org