



United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations

The **United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations** is a grassroots-led multiethnic human rights alliance. Our nine member organizations work in 30 communities in the Chicagoland area. Over the last year, we have worked with African-American, Latino, Asian and Arab-American leaders to develop racially equitable maps at the state and Congressional levels. Over 50 community organizations (list included) have signed on in support of the Unity Map released in March, drawing a total of 57 majority-minority state house and senate districts throughout the state.

We want to thank the Senate Redistricting Committee—especially Senator Raoul, for his leadership in ensuring that the Senate held public hearings after the release of draft maps as promised. We want to acknowledge and share our appreciation for the time each of you has put into this process, as well as understand the challenges and complexities faced in creating a fair redistricting map. We hope to continue to work with all of you to improve the redistricting process in the future.

Along with our coalition members, we have analyzed the house and senate maps released over the last two days. We believe that many of the principles, priorities and issues that the United Congress and its coalition partners have raised through this process are reflected in this map. In particular, we applaud the fact that the proposed maps keep Chinatown and Little Village—communities that have been split into multiple districts for the last decade—intact. We do, however, believe that the map can and should be improved to respect more communities of interest as well as include more voting rights districts, as well as stronger voting rights districts, to protect the voting rights of Illinoisans.

In particular, we ask that the General Assembly consider the following:

- Protect existing African-American state house and senate voting rights districts on the west side. Strengthen these districts to ensure there are effective majorities to ensure residents in these areas will be able to elect the candidates of their choice.
- Ensure that existing as well as new Latino state house and senate districts on the north and south sides have effective majorities to ensure residents in these areas will be able to elect the candidates of their choice. In particular, we believe that the percentages of north side districts can be strengthened and that percentages on the south side can be more balanced.

-Respect the communities of interest identified by Asian American communities on the north side by keeping them together in two house districts, and one senate district. We believe Asian Americans can and should make up at least a quarter of **two House districts and one Senate district, and that Asian American neighborhoods as defined by the people who live there can still be kept intact.**

-The Latino population in the South Chicago area can make up one-third of a house district. While it would be ideal to keep this population in one House district, in the interest of ensuring African-American districts in this area are protected, we ask that this community be drawn into at least one Senate district.

UCCRO's Unity map is supported by Alianza Leadership Institute, Alliance of Filipinos for Immigrant Rights and Empowerment, Arab American Action Network, Arab American Family Services, Ambassadors for Christ Church, Asian American Institute, Brighton Park Neighborhood Council, Cambodian Association of Illinois, Committee for a Unified Back of the Yards, Clergy Community to Community, Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community, Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago, Disciples for Christ Church, Enlace Chicago, Hamdard Center for Health & Human Services, Howleit and Associates, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, Illinois Latino Agenda, Inner City Muslim Action Network, Interfaith Leadership Project, Jeanette's Joy Community Services, Korean American Community Services, Korean American Resource and Cultural Center, Latino Policy Forum, Lawndale Alliance, Lawndale Amachi Program, Metropolitan Area Groups for Igniting Civilization, Mosque Foundation, Mothers Against Violence Everywhere, Muslim Women Resource Center, Neighbors United, Resident Association of Greater Englewood, Proyecto de Accion de los Suburbios del Oeste, Parkways Tenant Council, Project Mobilize, Puerto Rican Agenda, Sanad, Sankofa Incorporated, Target Area Development Corporation, Team 15 United, United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations Redistricting Committee, West Town Leadership United, and Woodlawn East Community and Neighbors Inc.

Thank You,

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