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CITY OF CHICAGO  
CITY COUNCIL

CITY HALL ROOM 200  
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COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS  
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TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WAY

January 10, 2022

Ald. Silvana Tabares  
Vice Chair, Chicago City Council Latino Caucus  
City Hall  
121 N. LaSalle St.  
Chicago, IL 60602

Dear Vice Chair Tabares,

I received your letter outlining your demands regarding how the Rules Committee should conduct public hearings on the city's redistricting process. I cannot agree to these unproductive requests.

Your insistence in undermining my leadership of my Committee demonstrates how uncooperative the Latino Caucus has been in negotiating with the rest of the Council on this important process. Making demands of me and your colleagues is not negotiating.

Months ago, I established a civil process for the remap rooted in collaboration and cooperation. The protocols were set for the entire City Council, and most members followed them. I encourage the Latino Caucus to join us. Your refusal to participate in good faith, without any predetermined non-negotiable demands will lead to a costly referendum for Chicago taxpayers. The last referendum in 1992 cost taxpayers \$20 million, and estimates I've received from the Budget Office double that cost at least.


In your most recent letter, you state that the federal District Court's recent redistricting decision regarding the Illinois legislative redistricting plan "is not relevant to the City Council and a presentation would create unnecessary confusion." Many of your colleagues disagree and have asked me for some insights regarding the potential implications of the case on our process. The fact that you are not interested in more information does not mean that your colleagues feel the same way.

The court's decision finding that the state plan complied with both the Constitution and the federal Voting Rights Act is relevant for several reasons. First, the data used to determine the state's legislative districts is the same precinct-level data we are using to create the city ward redistricting plan. Second, the court's decision was based on an analysis of precinct-level election returns in several Chicago-based legislative districts, which are the same precincts we use in our elections. Third, the court found an absence of illegal racial polarization in voting in the areas of Chicago, which is welcome news for all Chicagoans.

The majority of the City Council has come together to create a map that works for all Chicagoans. After receiving hundreds of public comments, we've created a map that increases Latino representation, decreases one Black ward, while still maintaining strong representation in City Hall, and creates our city's first Asian American ward.

As always, the map room (Room 200, Second Floor, City Hall) remains open for your engagement. Any alderperson interested in gathering in the map room can call Margaret Dever at 312-744-6801 to schedule a time. Every attendee in the map room must be masked at all times.

Sincerely,

  
Michelle A. Harris  
Alderman, 8th Ward