Commissioners - thank you for providing me the opportunity to testify today. My name is Elizabeth Meza, I am with the Weingart East Los Angeles YMCA and partnering with the NALEO Education Fund.

I have lived in Boyle Heights for the last 20 years. Boyle Heights is known for its cultural history, racial diversity, resilience, and activism. It is recognized as a low income community by both the city and county of LA. It is perceived to be a dangerous and neglected neighborhood but Boyle Heights has still managed to flourish despite it's struggle against gentrification, lack of resources, and over-policing.

I would like for Boyle Heights, El Sereno, and Lincoln Heights to remain under one congressional district. I would strongly discourage any of these neighborhoods to be split and represented by several public officials and instead be defined by the most recent census data. This would make government resources much more accessible.

Since my involvement with Boyle Heights during my early teenage years, I have noticed the resilience among the members of this community. Despite socio-economic barriers, immigration status, and lack of governmental representation; Boyle Heights has thrived with the help of community effort and activism.

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Boyle Heights, El Sereno, and Lincoln Heights have been disproportionately affected by: reduced access to health services, crowded housing, educational, income and wealth gaps and unemployment. According to the County of Los Angeles Public Health, the mortality rate among COVID 19 patients in the poorest areas of LA is three times as high as the mortality rate among richer LA neighborhoods. In council district 14 alone, 101,584 jobs were lost according to date on the LA controller website.

Overall, with the assistance from non-profit organizations, neighborhood activists, and community organizers/members, these communities managed to demonstrate their resilience. Food Distribution Centers, community clinics, and resource centers are the reason why our communities survived the detrimental effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.