March 21, 2012

Re: My comments regarding the Proposed Redistricting

My name is Verlena Matey-Keke. I live at 4038 Third Avenue South and have lived here since 1970.

I am sending this message to the Redistricting Commission because I feel compelled to express my strong objection to the separating of the 8th Ward from that part of the 9th Ward where African American Institutions are located in the Central neighborhood. I have no objections to any other part of the proposed redistricting.

At the public hearing held on Tue. March 20, I couldn't help but wonder if those with decision making authority noted that every African American that spoke, as well as some with other backgrounds, had objections to separating of the two Wards, and yet had no objections to any other part of the proposal.

I call your attention to the literature I picked up at the public hearing last evening, which says in part something about "cracking", in other words, "spreading minorities among so many districts that their voting power is diluted". It also says "it doesn't matter whether the effects are intentional or not". I ask that you consider those principles as you do a final draft of the redistricting map.

I see our city with the widest school achievement gap, the highest unemployment rate, the highest rate of incarnation for African Americans in the country, and I can tell you that part of the reason is the accumulative disingenuous acts that have produced the afore mentioned results.