

**TESTIMONY OF SAM MAGAVERN, CO-DIRECTOR OF THE PARTNERSHIP FOR THE  
PUBLIC GOOD AND**

**MEMBER OF COMMON CAUSE**

**BEFORE LATFOR, BUFFALO, FEBRUARY 16, 2012**

Good morning, my name is Sam Magavern. I'm a Buffalo resident. I co-direct the Partnership for the Public Good, which unites 108 community groups interested in good public policy for Buffalo Niagara and New York State, and I am a member of Common Cause. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I want to take the opportunity presented by this hearing to compare and contrast the LATFOR State Legislature drafts with the Common Cause Reform Plan.

We at PPG and Common Cause/NY are pleased to see that the LATFOR Assembly draft for the Buffalo region does a generally good job of drawing compact districts based on communities of interest. But there is still room for improvement. As you can see on page six of this testimony, the LATFOR draft divides Buffalo between four districts and divides the small cities of Lackawanna and North Tonawanda in half.

The Common Cause Reform Plan offers an alternative, showing how almost all of Buffalo can be drawn into two districts and how all the small cities of the region can be kept whole. This can be done while keeping the plan very similar to the overall structure of the LATFOR Draft. One district (CC Reform AD 141) can occupy Central Buffalo, while a second district (CC Reform AD 145) can unite the demographically similar communities of North and South Buffalo. This district would also include Buffalo's entire waterfront and would keep nearly all of the city's rapidly growing Hispanic community together in a single district.

In the State Senate, we believe that drawing three long narrow districts stretching from Buffalo to Rochester, SD's 59, 61, and 62-- poorly serves the communities of Western New York. Buffalo and Rochester are each the center of a separate regional economy and districts should

instead be oriented around each city. The Common Cause Reform Plan, as you can see on page three of this testimony, again offers a concrete alternative of how this could look – one district for Central Buffalo and Tonawanda, one district for the northern suburbs, one district for the southern suburbs, one district for the northern rural areas, and one district for the southern rural areas.

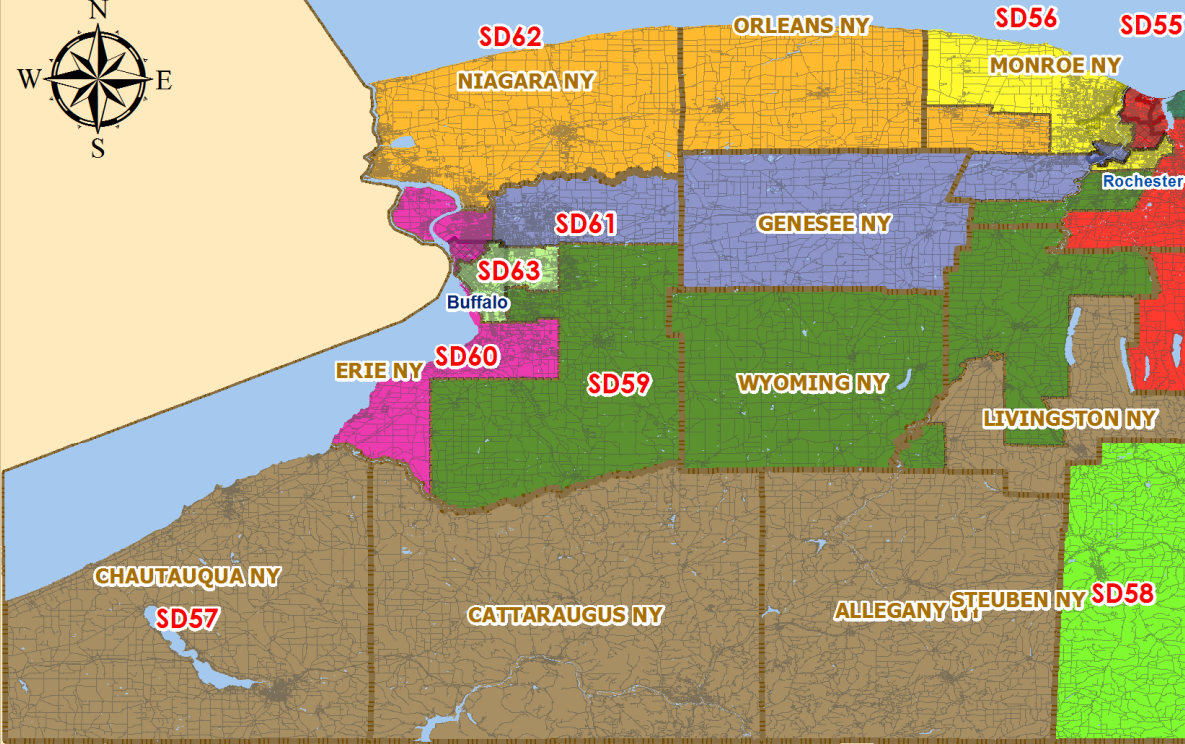
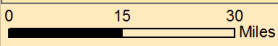
There is also the issue of the proposed District 60 in the LATFOR plan. As you can see on page five of this testimony, this district looks as if it were drawn to protect the incumbent Republican Senator Mark Grisanti. The irony here is that Senator Grisanti is living proof that a strong candidate can win without the advantage of gerrymandering, and can win in a district that may not look politically favorable on paper. But this task force is so accustomed to political gerrymandering that the decision was made to separate Senator Grisanti from his current constituents anyway.

For Congress, we can't repeat often enough how shameful it is that the public will not have an opportunity to offer input on a Congressional draft. The current Congressional lines are the product of an intensely partisan backroom political process and we fear that without the benefit of public testimony, the new draft will be just as bad. As you can see on pages seven and eight of this testimony, the current districts kidnap half of Buffalo's population into a district that stretches all the way to Rochester. Instead, separate Congressional districts can be drawn for the Buffalo and Rochester metropolitan areas as shown in the Common Cause Reform Plan.

We look forward to seeing how this task force responds to the many testimonies offered by the public during these last few weeks. Hopefully substantive changes will be made and this series of hearing will not prove to have been simply a "kabuki show." Thank you for your attention.

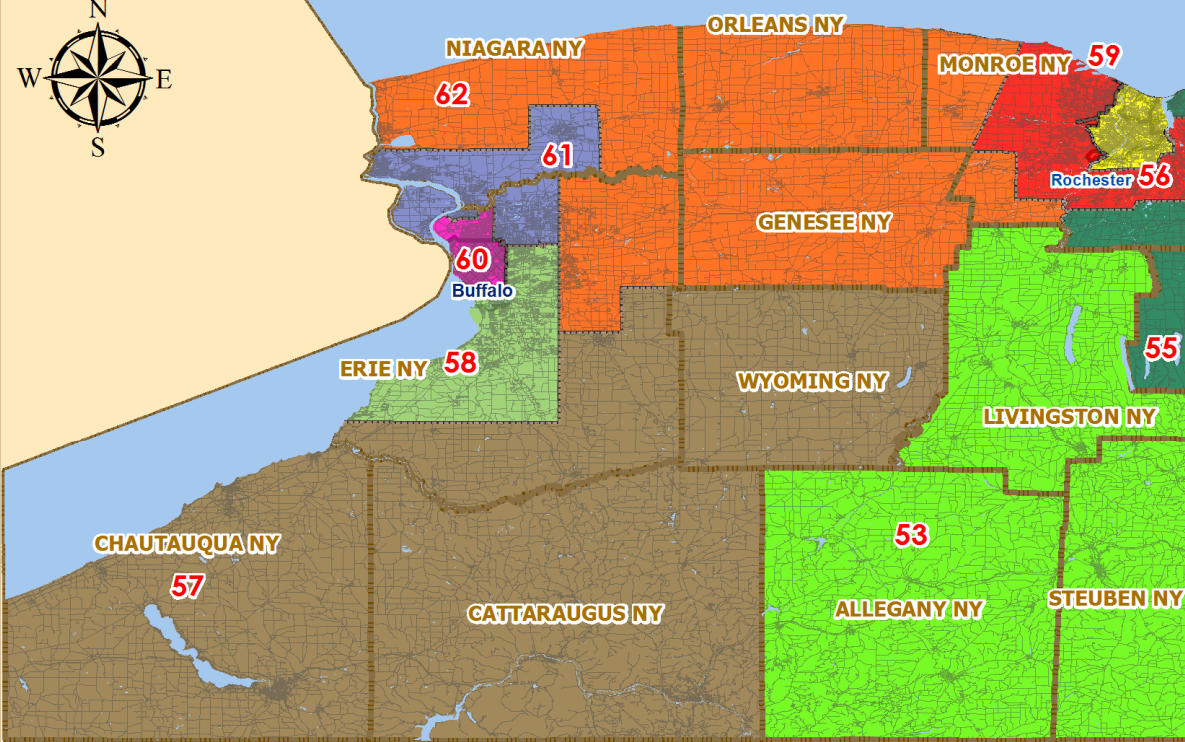
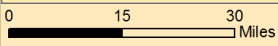
# LATFOR Senate Draft Western NY

Brian Paul, Common Cause/NY, 01/26/12



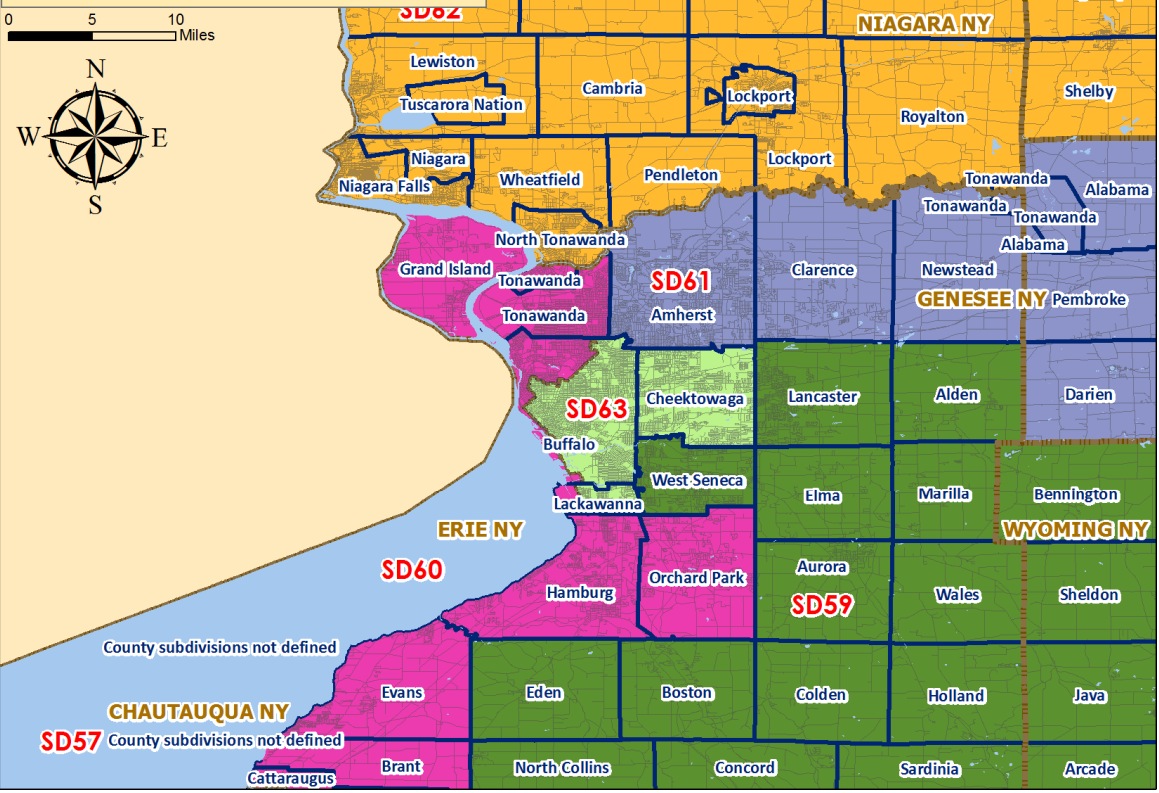
# Common Cause Reform Plan Western NY Senate 63

Brian Paul, Common Cause/NY, 01/26/12



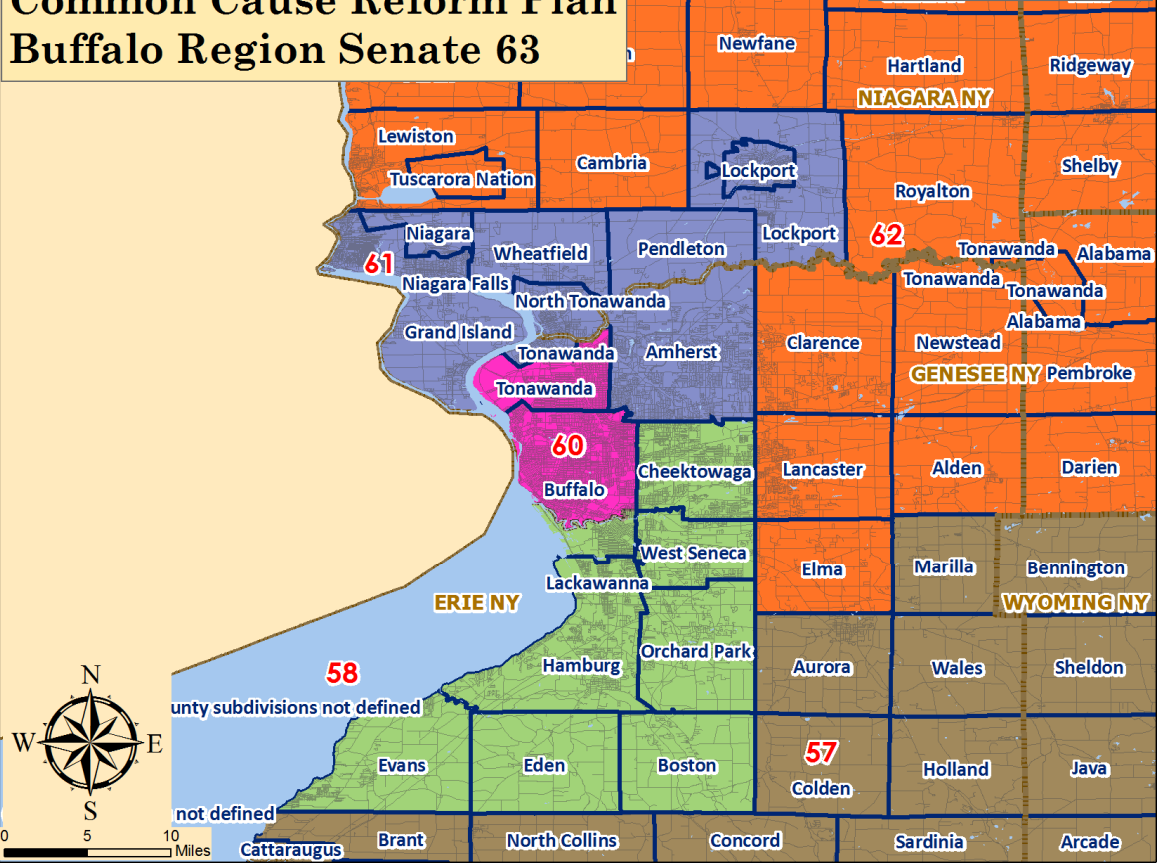
# LATFOR Senate Draft Buffalo Region

Brian Paul, Common Cause/NY, 01/26/12



# Common Cause Reform Plan Buffalo Region Senate 63

Brian Paul, Common Cause/NY, 01/26/12



# LATFOR Senate Draft Partisan Gerrymander SD 60

Brian Paul, Common Cause/NY, 01/26/12

0 5 10  
Miles



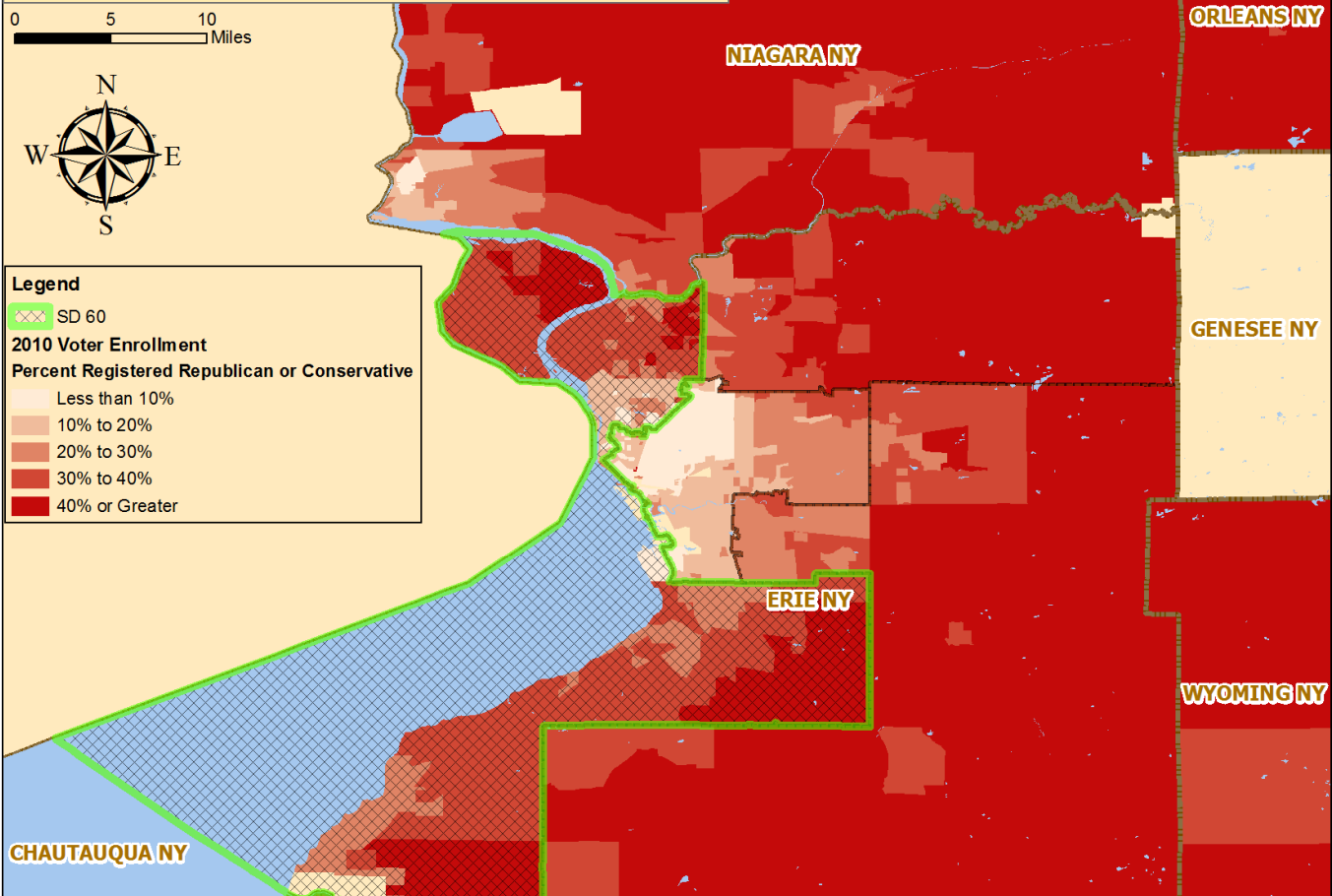
### Legend

SD 60

### 2010 Voter Enrollment

#### Percent Registered Republican or Conservative

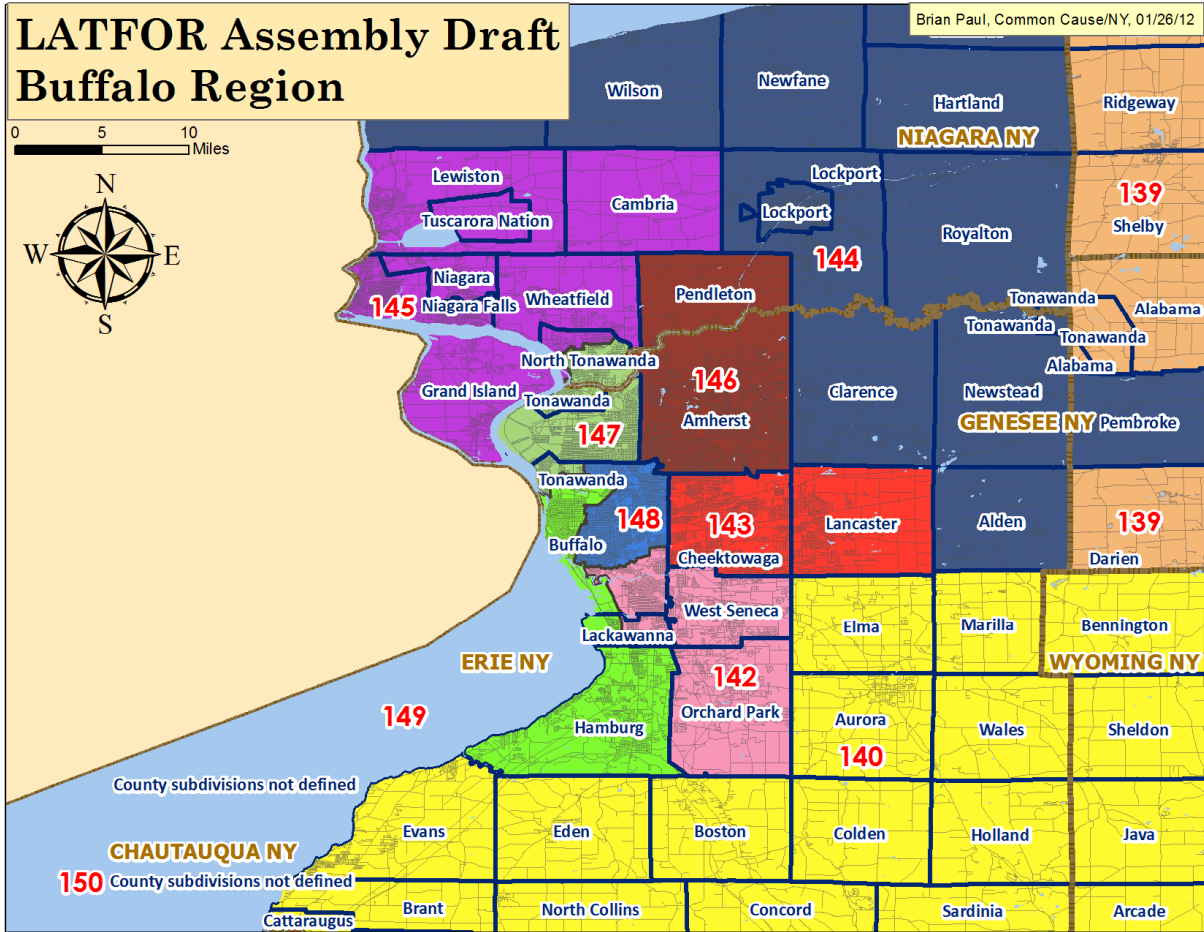
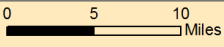
- Less than 10%
- 10% to 20%
- 20% to 30%
- 30% to 40%
- 40% or Greater



The proposed Senate District 60 appears to be drawn to maximize the chance of the Republican incumbent's re-election. The district now avoids the less conservative voters of Buffalo, instead skirting along the water to combine the City's northern and southern suburbs.

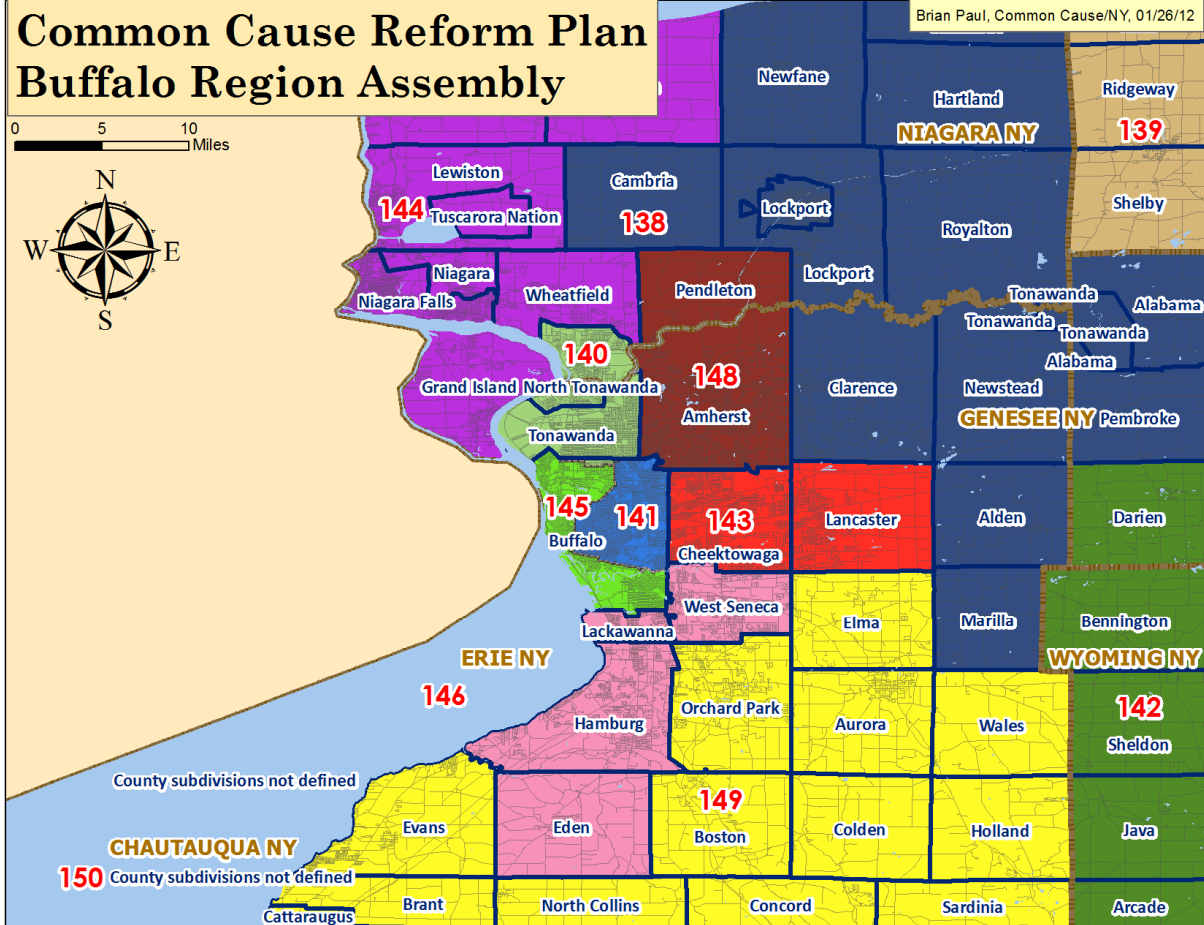
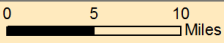
# LATFOR Assembly Draft Buffalo Region

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# Common Cause Reform Plan Buffalo Region Assembly

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# Current Congressional Districts Western New York

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0 25 50 Miles



# Common Cause Reform Plan Western New York Congress

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0 25 50 Miles

