



Comment on suggestion 17

Colac & District Chamber of Commerce & Industry

4 pages

From: [REDACTED]
To: [FedRedistribution - VIC](#)
Subject: Proposed Victorian Electoral Boundary Changes - Corangamite - Comment on Suggestions lodged by Colac & District Chamber of Commerce
Date: Wednesday, 29 November 2017 1:05:13 PM
Attachments: [Colac ^0 District Chamber of Commerce Submission Letter opposing the Boundaries of Electoral Divisions.docx](#)

Redistribution Committee for Victoria
Australian Electoral Commission,
Level 1, Urban Workshop
50 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne

We enclose submission regarding proposed electoral boundary changes in respect of the Corangamite electorate in Victoria. We are apposed to any movement of Colac Otway Region to the Wannon electorate.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Kind Regards

Ernie Andres

President

Colac & District Chamber of Commerce & Industry

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CHAMBER of
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linking business together

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GET IN TOUCH

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To whom it may concern,

Subject: Boundaries of electoral divisions
Electorate: Corangamite
Comment related to Suggestions 39, 65, 61 and 63.

Thank you for considering this submission regarding the proposed Victorian federal redistribution. This submission is on behalf of the board of the Colac District Chamber of Commerce Inc which is the representative body of the Colac Otway's business community.

Our submission strongly opposes any scenario that results in the movement of parts or in total of the Colac Otway Shire from the Corangamite electorate into the Wannon electorate. This scenario has been proposed in submissions by, but not limited to, the Nationals (Suggestion 39), the Australian Labor Party Victorian Branch (Suggestion 65) and the Australian Greens Victoria (Suggestion 61), but opposed by the Victorian Branch of The Liberal Party of Australia (Suggestion 63).

Political motivations aside, the proposed movement of Colac into the Wannon electorate will create a disjoint in demographics, dissimilar priorities and projects, their importance and result in spheres of influence that are far apart.

The Colac Otway Shire's social, economic and business interests are inextricably linked with Geelong and the Surf Coast. Colac's distance to the major centre of Geelong in the Corangamite electorate is 45 minutes by car whilst the centre of the Wannon electorate of Hamilton is 2 hours away.

Colac Otway Shire Council is an active participant and contributor to a range of strategic and collaborative partnerships connected to the Geelong and Surf Coast region including G21, the Barwon Regional Partnership and the GROW Project.

An example of the synergy that exists is the establishment of the Barwon South West Regional Business Council which incorporates the Geelong and Colac Chambers of Commerce plus

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other Barwon Region and Surf Coast Chambers. The council engages region business groups in partnership, with other programs where the mission is to plan and facilitate economic growth to a region which receives over 5.5 million tourists each year.

Colac is one of the major gateways to the Otway's, the Great Ocean road supporting townships and business throughout the costal hinterland.

A measure of Colac Otway's focus and direction is that it ceased its membership of the Great South Coast lobby group in 2016 in acknowledgement of the fact that our community's future and priorities were becoming increasingly linked with those of Geelong and the Surf Coast. Any shift of the Colac Otway Shire into the Wannon electorate would have a detrimental effect on the people of the Colac Otway Shire based on the community of interest principle

Residents of the Colac Otway Shire gravitate to Geelong for work, further education, specialist healthcare, sport and entertainment. This connection has been further underpinned by the duplication of the Princes Highway, and the introduction of extra rail services between Colac and Geelong (which were delivered after a sustained advocacy campaign by Council and our community).

Further expansion of community interest matters are shown in the pages to follow, data provided to us by our Colac Otway Shire.

Workforce:

Colac's employers are heavily reliant on Geelong for professional workers, particularly in public sector roles. Council's REMPLAN data shows that there are currently 239 people living in Geelong that work in Colac, filling vital specialist and technical roles in health, community development, environment, education, planning and engineering to give examples.

Conversely, many residents of the Colac Otway Shire travel to Geelong for work particularly those trying to broaden their career experience, with a view to eventually obtaining a more senior role closer to home. REMPLAN shows that there are currently 229 people live in Colac and travel to Geelong for work. Tourism businesses along our coast and in the Otway's, are particularly reliant on workers from the Geelong and Surf Coast, being unable to draw all their seasonal staff from the Colac Otway Shire.

These exchanges of human capital create tangible links between our communities that are enhanced through being in the same federal electorate.

Education:

The low rate of educational attainment among Colac Otway Shire residents is an important consideration within the context of the proposed redistribution.

Year 12 attainment for Colac Otway is 33.2 per cent, compared to a state average of 51.7 per cent. Colac Otway's rate of university qualification is 9.8 per cent - less than half that of the state average (G21's Colac Otway Regional Profile 2014). Deakin University Geelong is the closest university to Colac, and the most accessible by both road and rail. Geelong's The Gordon is also an important post-secondary education provider for our shire, evidenced by its satellite campus at the Colac Trade Training Centre.

Under Department of Education and Training zonings, Colac Otway Shire is part of the Barwon region, which also encompasses Geelong and the Surf Coast. Colac Otway Shire's link to

Geelong is vital to ensuring further education is both accessible and attainable to our citizens and is made stronger by our shared presence in the Corangamite electorate.

Healthcare:

Colac Otway Shire residents experience many inequities in health including a higher rate of all potentially avoidable deaths (179.3 versus 158.2 per 100,000) (G21 Colac Otway Regional Profile).

There is strong anecdotal evidence to suggest that a majority of Colac Otway Shire's residents have a preference for Geelong when they need specialist health care not otherwise available locally. For residents relying on public transport, Geelong provides the only viable option for specialist healthcare due to a lack of timely rail services to Warrnambool and the complete absence of a direct public transport service to Ballarat.

There are many examples of healthcare providers in Geelong and Colac working together to deliver shared care arrangements. There is a long list of co-located services operating out of Colac Area Health including a community dental clinic, Barwon community legal services, and medical and radiation oncology. These important healthcare partnerships may be undermined should parts or all of the Colac Otway Shire be moved into Wannon electorate.

Sport and entertainment

The links between Geelong and Colac via sport and entertainment are significant. In almost every sporting arena, the Colac Otway Shire is part of Barwon or Geelong region zoning including football, netball, baseball, soccer, cricket and basketball. This association also extends to regional advocacy and planning, where Colac Otway Shire Council works in partnership with G21 to develop strategic plans supporting the development of sport and recreation across our region. Indeed, Colac Otway Shire Council's partnership with G21 was pivotal in securing funding support from other levels of government for the Bluewater and Central Reserve redevelopments.

The Colac Football Netball Club plays in the Geelong Football League, precipitating several hundred players, supporters and club administrators travelling up or down the highway every weekend in winter. The Geelong Falcons is a training ground for the Colac Otway Shire's up and coming footballers, so too is the Geelong Cougars for netball and the Barwon Rockets for cricket. For nine years Colac's Bluewater Leisure Centre has partnered with the Barwon Sports Academy to provide shared specialist training to some of our shire's most promising young athletes.

A change of electorates could potentially undermine long-established networks that have supported our shire's athletes to achieve on the state, national and world stage.

If you have any inquiries concerning this matter, please contact me on [REDACTED]

Regards,

Ernie Andres
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