



Objection 317

Gavin Ryan

2 pages

I write in support of the proposed boundaries of the electorates of Cox, as outlined in the *Proposed redistribution of Victoria into electoral divisions April 2018*. I write as someone who lived within the Division of Corangamite for eighteen years and who continues to work across Geelong and the Bellarine, commuting at least once a week. My family has lived and worked throughout the Division of Corangamite and Wannon since migrating from Ireland in the 1880s and the Netherlands more recently in the 1950s.

This proposal aligns strongly with the AEC criteria for redistribution outlined in the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* which considers:

- Current and projected enrolment in Divisions;
- Common community interests including social, economic and regional interests;
- Means of communication and travel within the proposed electoral division; and
- The physical features and area of the proposed electoral division.

I will address each of these in turn.

Current and projected enrolment in Divisions

The proposed boundaries align very closely with the numerical requirements outlined in the report (as required by the Commonwealth Electoral Act) when looking at the projected enrolment in the proposed Division of Cox.

The proposed boundaries will accommodate future growth in enrolment more closely aligned communities of interest. The SA2s of Colac and Colac Region (which under the proposed boundaries are being placed into Wannon) together have a current enrolment of 11,915 and a projected enrolment of 12,041, suggesting a fairly stable population, and therefore are unlikely to push the Division of Wannon to being over quota in the near future.

Including the SA2s of Colac and Colac Region into the proposed Division of Cox does not make sense given that the projected growth in enrolment of the proposed Division of Wannon is less than 0.5%, compared to the proposed Division of Cox (where growth in enrolment is projected to grow more than 5% by August 2019), and it is likely that the next redistribution will see Cox shrink even more geographically to take account of its growing population. The current proposal for the Division of Cox allows for other areas of the Colac Otway shire to be included in Wannon in future should there be a need to ease the population pressure on the proposed Division of Cox.

Including the SA2s of Colac and Colac Region in the proposed Division of Cox from the proposed division of Wannon into the proposed Division of Cox also results in a projected enrolment of just over 100,716 for Wannon, putting it well below the minimum projected enrolment quota of 106,509. If the proposed Division of Wannon loses these SA2s of Colac and Colac Region, the proposed Division of Wannon will have to find between 5,793 and 13,519 electors from another division to meet the projected enrolment quota. Under this scenario the redistribution committee would have to consider Ballarat and Horsham given these are the only population centres that provide enough population. Using Ballarat in this way would necessitate splitting the Division of Ballarat (undesirable when looking the communities of interest provisions of the Commonwealth Electoral Act) and using Horsham in this way puts the Division of Mallee under the minimum projected quota by 6,834. Further to this, removing Colac from Wannon would likely require a substantial redistribution of Mallee, and given the lack of significant population areas in northwest Victoria this would cause problems in that Mallee may be under quota.

Common community interests including social, economic and regional interests

There are strong communities of interest among the residents who live along the surf coast and Bellarine Peninsula coast and in the growing communities of the Geelong hinterland, Many who work, play sport and have community interests in across both the Surf Coast, the Bellarine and into Geelong. Putting these areas together in the proposed Division of Cox by transferring the Bellarine Peninsula from the Division of Corio to the Division of Cox unites the coastal communities of the Bellarine Peninsula and the Surf Coast that share these extremely strong economic, social and regional interests. This is crucially important given their growth independent of the centre of

Geelong and the economic linkage of the Great Ocean Road. It will enable a more efficient and effective linking of these communities who share challenges in regards to new infrastructure to serve growing communities, and resolving tourism and population pressures along the coast as highlighted by the Great Ocean Road Taskforce. This is also why Apollo bay, a costal tourist destination linked by its location on the Great Ocean Road, shares substantially greater communities of interest with other similar towns to be located in Cox such as Lorne, Anglesea and Torquay (all located in the Surf Coast Shire) than the inland regional centre of Colac.

The proposed new Division of Cox also consolidates parts of urban and industrial Geelong from the old Division of Corangamite into the Division of Corio, making the Division of Corio predominantly represent urban Geelong, an extremely strong community of interest socially and economically.

Means of communication and travel within the proposed electoral division

The proposed Division of Cox unites the coastal communities in the Bellarine with the communities in the Surf Coast and along the Great Ocean Road that all share the same travel into Geelong regularly for work and access to specialist services, education and social opportunities.

The moving of Colac into the proposed Division of Wannon is to be supported as Colac is an inland regional centre and with strong transport, community and communication links to the southwest region, Ballarat and Warrnambool. This more accurately reflects the means of communications and travel as Colac relies on the same arterial links, the Princes Highway and the Warrnambool rail line, for freight, commuting and for access to services as does most of the Division of Wannon.

The physical features and area of the proposed electoral division

The proposed Division of Cox uses the strong and predominant feature of the coastline and Great Ocean Road as a focus of the new division. This combined with the consolidation of urban Geelong into the proposed division of Corio makes the identifying features of the proposed Division of Cox strong and unmistakable – the Geelong hinterland down to the coastal communities. This also serves to unite and strengthen communities of interest that are also shaped by these physical features.