



Comment on suggestions 60

Trent Wilson

3 pages

Trent Wilson



Comment on Suggestions for Victorian Federal Redistribution 2024

Agreement with S63 and their Deakin / Menzies boundaries

For the most part, I very much support S63 submitted by 'Anonymous 3'.

Obviously, this is partly because much of that suggestion is very similar to my own (S53), including:

- The exact same Macnamara/Higgins boundaries that I am advocating for;
- The abolition of Hotham
- A similar treatment of the Bruce, Holt & La Trobe area
- Similar minor changes in the north-western suburbs.

However, one thing I believe S63 does significantly better than my proposal is the boundaries around Deakin, Menzies and Casey.

I noted in my own submission S53 that I was not too familiar with that area, and while I moved Menzies entirely north of the Eastern Freeway and made Deakin a Whitehorse based seat, I stated that people with better local knowledge may have a better solution.

I believe S63 presents an excellent alternative to my boundaries in that particular area, and would probably support their Deakin/Menzies boundaries more than my own.

Support for Macnamara/Higgins Boundaries

I will also note that all of the following suggestions also broadly supported the idea of moving the Chapel St corridor from Higgins to Macnamara, and the Glen Eira area from Macnamara to Higgins:

S3, S8, S50 and S63.

In addition to that:

- *S10* also suggests removing Glen Huntly Rd as a boundary (as does mine)
- *S32* expresses support for the same proposals in the past
- *S60* abolishes Higgins, but similarly transfers the Chapel St corridor into Macnamara, and transfers the Caulfield area out

That's at least 8 suggestions including mine that, in some way, propose or express support for moving the Chapel Street precinct into Macnamara and removing the Caulfield area.

Support for realignment around Bruce

The following suggestions (while they do look like a coordinated campaign) all support moving Mulgrave into Chisholm and Dandenong South into Bruce, as do I in S53:

S14, S15, S18, S19, S33 and S43.

Likewise, *S10* also proposes to centre the seat of Bruce more on the City of Dandenong, and expresses the same concerns around the existing seat of Hotham taking in both Bentleigh East and Noble Park, while *S32* & *S63* suggest some similar changes around Bruce, Holt and La Trobe.

Expansion of Goldstein

In my proposal S53, I add part of Bentleigh East (west of East Boundary Road) to Goldstein along with part of Moorabbin (west of Chesterville Rd), the remainder of Highett, and the area between the rail line and Nepean Highway.

I mention that these changes are more necessary to make surrounding seats work than specifically to improve Goldstein's boundaries – although Goldstein does require additional electors.

However, I noticed in the suggestions that various other suggestions did also support some of the same elements:

- *S9* also puts the same part of Bentleigh East (west of East Boundary Rd) in Goldstein;
- *S27* also has Goldstein taking the same part of Moorabbin;
- *S63* also puts Bentleigh East & Moorabbin into Goldstein, albeit differently to me

So there does seem to be some broad support for that particular area around Bentleigh East & Moorabbin being united with Goldstein.

Most importantly, projection numbers & where to abolish?

S63 provided some excellent arguments for why the projection numbers provided by the ABS may not be particularly accurate as they apply a similar growth rate to all SA1s.

There is a general consensus on psephology forums that the ABS projections dramatically overestimate growth in the southeast, while underestimating it in the northwest.

Therefore, given we do need to work within the tolerance thresholds provided (-/+ 3.5% of quota on 2028 projections), it makes the most sense to aim for the following:

- Seats in the north/west to be below quota but within range (in the 123-126k range)
- Seats in the south/east to be above quota but within range (in the 128-131k range)

By doing so, south-eastern seats have the best chance at remaining within tolerance of quota for longer, while north-western seats have more room to grow at a faster rate than projected.

The best way to achieve this is to abolish a seat in the **south-eastern suburbs**, as it pushes more electors into fewer seats on that side of the city, while the north-west doesn't need to gain electors as a whole, also reducing the need to send electors across the Yarra River.

As a few suggestions have all noted, **Hotham** is currently the most problematic seat, and its abolition actually creates the best opportunity to improve surrounding seats which also need an overhaul.

The Liberal Party Submission

I note that the Liberal Party did not make a submission, as it is reported that they missed the deadline. However, their submission is published online for public viewing, and is reportedly being submitted in this round of Comments on Submissions.

Given this does not provide the opportunity to comment on their submission, I would like to take the opportunity to comment on what they have published.

- I wholeheartedly disagree with their argument that the seats in the north-western suburbs are problematic and require realignment, but that the seats in the south-eastern suburbs are “some of the commission’s best work” and should be changed as little as possible;
- North-western seats like Maribyrnong, Wills, Cooper, Calwell and Scullin have extremely strong boundaries that are mostly shaped by rivers & creeks that have very few transport links crossing them, they largely align very closely with LGAs, and each of those seats also has a train line (and often tram routes) running right through the middle, forming very strong communities of interest with excellent transport links;
- Conversely, as mentioned in my previous section as well as my submission (S53), the boundaries in the south-eastern suburbs have gradually moved over time to create seats that for the most part do not have cohesive communities of interest, often out of necessity due to numbers and “left over” areas, and some seats really are like two completely different seats sandwiched together (Hotham & Isaacs are great examples);
- The opportunity to abolish a seat in the south east, and the new quota target that results from the combination of a higher population and 1 less Victorian seat, creates the best opportunity in a very long time to create cohesive electorates in the south-eastern suburbs that align much better with demographics and LGAs, including:
 - An Isaacs that is better focused on Kingston LGA and the ‘sandbelt’
 - A Bruce that is better focused on working class Greater Dandenong
 - A Higgins that unites Glen Eira with the more suburban parts of Stonnington
 - A Macnamara that unites all the dense inner-city suburbs of the “inner south”
 - A Holt & La Trobe that are no longer suburban/regional hybrids but instead focus on the growth suburbs along the Cranbourne & Pakenham Lines respectively
- Meanwhile, only small changes in the north-western suburbs will keep their already cohesive electorates intact while allowing room for the growth to be above the ABS projection, as it is widely expected to be;
- Finally, while some of the written justifications in the Liberal Party submission make sense, the maps resulting from it form extremely awkward shapes with very weak boundaries that would likely be confusing to electors, and arguably look like textbook gerrymandering;

Compare their boundaries to the ones I submitted for seats like Higgins & Chisholm which are very compact, logical and use strong boundaries that separate very different communities.