



# Objection 171

John Corcoran

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I am an enrolled elector in the Division of Higgins.

In relation to the Victorian Redistribution Proposal as affecting Higgins, I object to that proposed abolition for the following reasons.

Although created in 1949, the historical context and impact of the Higgins name spans from the very early post-Federation period to contemporary Australia.

In 1907 Justice Henry Higgins of the Arbitration Court, adjudged a *fair and reasonable* wage to be 7 shillings a day for an unskilled labourer, and that judgement formed the basis of the basic wage and minimum wage measures which thereafter underpinned Australia's economic development from those earliest Federation days to the present.

That judgement by Henry Higgins therefore had an immensely significant impact which was shared by all Australians, across the whole of the nation, and thus the continuation of the Division of Higgins should be seen as a shared recognition of that national interest.

*Fair and reasonable* are concepts and measures that are now seen to be traditionally embedded in the Australian ethos.

Henry Higgins had earlier served as a Foundation Member elected to Australia's First Parliament, and that important link to our Inaugural Federal Election should continue to be recognised.

Henry Higgins also later served as a longstanding Justice of the High Court of Australia.

Higgins has the notable and unique distinction of having two former Members who have served as Prime Ministers.

Higgins has also provided two Treasurers, including by a significant margin, Australia's longest serving Treasurer.

Furthermore, the significant status of Justice Henry Higgins in respect to establishing a minimum wage basis, as well as the parliamentary history of the Division of Higgins, should be recognised and supported by all political parties that have held or contested that seat – the push to retain Higgins is not a partisan issue.

It is also particularly important that the City of Stonnington, being a solid *Community of Interests*, should not be divided and spread across 5 Federal electorates – and that Stonnington interests should continue to be represented through a **single** Federal Member in Canberra.

I note that the Division of Chisholm presently does not meet the Redistribution quota for Victoria and also does not meet the Projected enrolment quota for Victoria.

I note also that Chisholm has boundaries with 7 other adjoining Divisions, and that 6 out of that 7 are Divisions which also do not meet the Projected enrolment quota for Victoria, whereas in the case of Higgins; 2 out of 6 in a corresponding measure, do meet the Projected enrolment quota for Victoria.

Chisholm should therefore be a prime consideration for abolition.

I further note that 2 other Divisions, Maribyrnong and Aston, each fall further short than Higgins in not meeting the Projected enrolment quota for Victoria.

Whereas the 4 Divisions that adjoin Aston are all showing that they are not meeting the Projected enrolment quota for Victoria, Aston should be viewed alongside the Division of Chisholm, as being clearly the more appropriate considerations for abolition, than is the case for Higgins.

I request that the Victorian Redistribution Proposal as presently published be amended, and that the AEC acts to retain and carry forward the important Higgins historical links to the whole of our federated history, and that the AEC therefore selects another Division in place of abolishing Higgins.

I request that the selection for Victorian Division abolition be made between Chisholm and Aston.