



Objection 499

Will Douglas

2 pages

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the Redistribution Committee's proposed electoral boundaries for Victoria. I would first like to thank the Committee for their work, so important to the functioning of our democracy. As a citizen interested in democracy and the electoral process, I would like to make the following comments.

Overall I am mostly happy with the proposed boundaries. I have no objection to the choice of division to be abolished. Many boundaries are improved, and in the cases where strong boundaries (such as Moonee Ponds Creek and Gardiners Creek) are abandoned I generally cannot see better alternatives that would meet the numerical requirements of the Electoral Act. However, there are a few cases where I believe the proposed boundaries could be improved.

Melbourne and Macnamara

Needing to extend the division of Melbourne south of the Yarra River, the Redistribution Committee has proposed that it should take in parts of Melbourne, South Yarra and Prahran located between St Kilda Road, High Street, and Williams Road. In my opinion this boundary is weak on community of interest grounds. There are few crossings of the Yarra in this area, and the bulk of the added population is a long way from the heart of the electorate, making it increasingly unwieldy.

I suggest that the division take in the areas around Southbank instead. Much of this area has a central city character, located within the City of Melbourne, and with a plethora of connections across the Yarra River. The division of Macnamara could instead take in Prahran and South Yarra, extending to Williams Road as proposed in previous redistributions, but without dividing communities of interest further south. To meet numerical requirements, the division of Melbourne should take in the whole of the Port Melbourne Industrial SA2 (the Fishermans Bend urban renewal area), with the boundary then following the West Gate Freeway, Toorak Road, and Punt Road. In my opinion these boundaries would make both Melbourne and Macnamara stronger and more cohesive electorates.

Corio and Lalor

With continued rapid growth in the area, the division of Lalor has to shrink significantly. Most of this is achieved by the transfer of Williams Landing and parts of Point Cook out of the electorate, but the Committee has also proposed extending the division of Corio into the city of Wyndham. I strongly object to these changes. Although the bulk of the area concerned does indeed have a more regional character, large areas within Melbourne's urban growth boundary will be placed within a division based on the regional city of Geelong. New housing estates including Cornerstone, Windermere, and Parkbrook – under construction right now with some residents already moved or moving in – are located within the proposed division of Corio, despite being in every way part of metropolitan Melbourne. These boundaries would cut future residents off from their neighbours in Wyndham, and instead give them an MP based in Geelong, weakening their representation and dividing communities of interest.

Any area within the urban growth boundary should remain a part of a Melbourne-based seat. Given the SA1 boundaries in the area, I suggest that the western boundary of Lalor remain at the Little River, with parts of Werribee South transferred to Gellibrand as necessary to meet numerical requirements.

Hawke and Gorton

The Redistribution Committee has also proposed to adjust the north-eastern boundary of Gorton to follow the Calder Freeway, placing residents of Keilor North and part of Keilor within the division of Hawke. Although this area does have a more regional and peri-urban character in common with the division of Hawke, the area is thoroughly oriented towards the communities of Keilor, Sydenham and Taylors Lakes within the division of Gorton. There are no transport links across the river valley to neighbouring parts of Hawke, with the major centres of Sunbury and Melton distant from this community.

Given the movement is not required to meet the numerical requirements of the Electoral Act, I propose that the 92 electors involved remain within the division of Gorton, whose north-eastern boundary should continue to follow the Maribyrnong River and Jacksons Creek.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to make this submission.