



The Federal Redistribution 2010
Victoria



Objection Number 16

John Forrest MP, Federal Member for Mallee

2 pages



John Forrest MP

Federal Member for Mallee



Tuesday 24 August, 2010

Mr Ed Killesteyn
Chairman
Australian Electoral Commission
Redistribution Secretariat
GPO Box 9867
MELBOURNE VIC 8060

Dear Mr Killesteyn

Re: The impact of redistribution in the Division of Mallee

My issues with the proposed redistribution and changes to the boundaries of the Division of Mallee are summarised as follows:

1. Declining population estimates might not be as pessimistic as projected and may even be reversed with growth at Mildura, Horsham and Swan Hill continuing at a strong rate and new business and livestock enterprise opportunities due to an assured clean water supply with the new Wimmera Mallee Pipeline. The advent of economic extraction of mineral sands is also seeing new investment occurring across the region.
2. By taking the Wimmera Shires and Horsham Rural City out of Mallee, the community connection and Wimmera Mallee Pipeline system from north to south will be fragmented. Exciting new opportunities are already emerging with development of intensive poultry farms producing ducks, chickens, squabs, eggs and intensive livestock because of the assurance of quality water.
3. By taking the Wimmera Shires out of Mallee, the common interests in grain production, storage and handling will also be split.
4. With the proposed redistribution of Mallee boundaries into the Division of Murray, there will be another fragmentation of common interest and purpose with the Goulburn water system be cut in two – some to Mallee and some to McEwen and Indi. In addition, the Murray and Goulburn river systems are quite different to each other – the Murray has Hume and Dartmouth storages and the Goulburn has Lake Eildon.
5. By abolishing the Division of Murray, another regional seat will be removed and there will be a conflict between urban and rural interests.

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The Division of Mallee, with its current boundaries, best embodies common interests in water from the Murray River, water from the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline servicing nine municipalities, continuing urban and economic growth in the three regional centres of Mildura, Horsham and Swan Hill which are interlinked by a number of smaller but no less important towns.

In addition there is the common purpose and interests in grain farming and crop types including hard wheat production, livestock production in beef, wool and early season fat lambs and the supporting manufacturing and service sectors.

The Division of Mallee is a well-contained electorate within its current boundaries. The addition of the Shire of Loddon would be sufficient to make up any interim shortfall in electors.

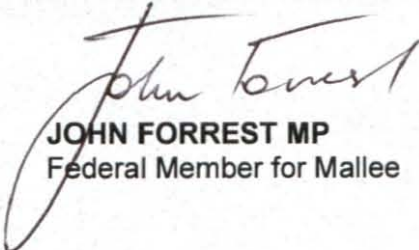
There is good potential for population growth in the longer term with a recovery in irrigation water availability, improved commodity prices particularly in wine and grain and recovery from prolonged drought in the dry land farming areas.

Ahead there is accelerating innovation in farming and farming techniques, potential new developments in intensive horticulture, relocation of industries into the region including opportunities enhanced by faster communications technology and a quality lifestyle, the potential for solar power generation and the potential for further bio-diesel production development with identified new oilseed varieties.

In addition, the fourth mineral sands mining operation has been announced to commence, bringing new investment, local jobs and prosperity which will contribute significantly to projected population decline.

Rather than seeing a reduced regional population base as a percentage of the Victorian population as a whole, the Division of Mallee is on the cusp of accelerated growth in regionality, due to lower cost infrastructure, cheaper housing, more open space, quality water supplies, improved transport links and communication advances.

Yours sincerely



JOHN FORREST MP
Federal Member for Mallee

