



Objection Number 40

Frank Oliver, Rochester Ward Councillor, Shire of Campaspe

2 pages

From: Frank Oliver [f.oliver@campaspe.vic.gov.au]
Sent: Friday, 27 August 2010 7:35 AM
To: VIC Redistribution
Subject: Re: Objection to the Proposed Redistribution of Federal Election Boundaries in Victoria

Australian Electoral Commission
GPO Box 9867
MELBOURNE VIC 8060

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Objection to the Proposed Redistribution of Federal Election Boundaries in Victoria

As a Councillor of the Shire of Campaspe, I wish to lodge a personal objection to the proposed redistribution of Federal Election Boundaries in Victoria, in particular the abolishment of the electorate of Murray.

Given the location of the Shire of Campaspe, I can understand the challenges you face in drawing new electoral boundaries. Under the Fairer Victoria boundaries, Campaspe is situated in the Loddon-Mallee Region of Victoria but is also tied to the Hume Region due to a large proportion of the Shire being in the Goulburn Valley. In addition, while the Shire is a member of the Murray River Group of Councils, which takes in Municipalities from Moira to our East right through to Mildura to our North West, it also has a strong connectedness to Bendigo and the goldfields to our South. Therefore, I realise the differing ties between locations that require consideration in these matters.

I feel that the proposed new electorate of Mallee is not only very large and therefore difficult for an elected representative to cover but also incorporates communities with diverse interests. Whilst we do have many dry land farms within our Shire, our strongest community of interest with our neighbours is based on irrigated agriculture. This includes the Municipalities of Moira, Shepparton, Gannawarra and Loddon.

However, the Mallee region, outside of the Murray River environs is predominately wide-area dry land cropping. This region has its own particular issues, which are not necessarily common to ours.

Our transport links to Melbourne are mainly due South with our rail link connecting through Bendigo. (Conversely, Mildura's rail link is via Ballarat). We envisage that further population development within rural Victoria is most likely to occur via the transport corridors and, therefore, linking Campaspe with Bendigo would provide for more appropriate redistribution in the future, rather than linking us to Mildura and Swan Hill.

I would highlight, in particular, three issues. Firstly, the proposed redistribution places the Shire of Campaspe and our nearest neighbours into three different federal electorates and disconnects Campaspe from its community of interest and transport connections to the South.

Secondly, the extension of the electorate of McEwen from the outskirts of metropolitan Melbourne to the rural city of Shepparton not only combines communities with very different outlooks, values and expectations but also, in my opinion, reduces the representation of Victoria's rural population. Thirdly, the deletion of the name "Murray" and the renaming of the proposed electorate to "Mallee" gives a completely incorrect impression regarding the nature of the proposed new electorate. The term "Mallee" conjures up scenes of wide-open plains with sandy soils and grain crops, while the term "Murray" promotes pictures of rivers, green pastures with plentiful fruit and vegetables.

I look forward to you considering this objection when conducting your final deliberations regarding the redistribution of federal electoral boundaries within Victoria and thank you for your indulgence.

Yours faithfully

Frank Oliver
Rochester Ward Councillor
Shire of Campaspe
PO Box 35, Echuca 3564
Telephone: (03) 5481 2200, Facsimile: (03) 5481 2290
Home: (03) 5433 6270, Mobile: 0428 320 464
Email: f.oliver@campaspe.vic.gov.au

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