



Objection Number 43

Sandra Gatehouse, Secretary – Barwon Heads Association

3 pages

From: Sandra Gatehouse
Sent: Friday, 27 August 2010 10:17 AM
To: VIC Redistribution
Cc: 'Jan Farrell'; 'John Burke'; Anthea Merewether; Geoffrey Waite; Judith Brooks; Liddy Nevile; Maggie Niall; Paul Fox; RK Dott/Suter; Sandra Gatehouse; Stephen Wickham
Subject: Objection to proposed Victorian Redistribution
Attachments: Final OBJECTION TO PROPOSED VICTORIAN REDISTRIBUTION 2010.pdf

Find attached our objection to the proposed redistribution, and the separation of the village of Barwon Heads from other Bellarine communities in particular Ocean Grove.

Sandra Gatehouse
Secretary
Barwon Heads Association



OBJECTION TO PROPOSED VICTORIAN REDISTRIBUTION 2010 AUSTRALIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION

The village of Barwon Heads has a population of over 3,000.

Barwon Heads Association has currently 140 members and has the following objectives:

- To advance the progress, welfare, and development of the community residing within Barwon Heads and District
- To provide a forum for discussion of matters affecting the community
- To represent the community in discussions with Federal, State and Municipal Governments relating to its progress, welfare and development

We are surprised at the timing of the launch of the re-distribution and have had insufficient time to review the proposed changes with all of our members due to the limitations of our meeting cycle.

The BHA committee and executive does, however, put forward the following concerns:

We consider that the Committee should have started its redistribution from the country - where there are very identifiable communities of interest - and work into the metropolitan area; rather than constructing a new electorate in the metropolitan area and then working out.

We feel that small communities such as Barwon Heads are at risk of being overlooked and our interests de-valued in this process. Also it seems that the proposed re-distribution slices the City of Greater Geelong once again, which is a potential threat to its political and economic stability. We have noted and support submissions from Cr Farrell and Cr Kontejl from the City of Greater Geelong, and share their concerns that the City's role has been devalued in the redistribution.

We also note that the Committee has acknowledged the community of interest between Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove as follows:

The Committee notes that the unification of the Bellarine Peninsula in a single division was common to several public suggestions, however, given the Committee's need to realign the outer metropolitan divisions west of Melbourne, it was not possible numerically to achieve this entirely. The Committee notes the community of interest between Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads in particular, but was unable to include this area in Corio without exceeding the allowable enrolment. The Committee saw the Barwon River as a readily identifiable boundary given the singular crossing point of Barwon Heads – Ocean Grove Road in the area.

We do not accept that the realignment of the outer metropolitan divisions west of Melbourne should have such a profound impact on the future representation of Barwon Heads.

In particular we are concerned that the proposed re-distribution of Federal Boundaries once again separates us from Ocean Grove and the other six Bellarine Communities – the communities that we share services and interests with.



These community of interest matters are extensive. There is significant co-existence which has evolved over many years which has a very strong economic and social impact on the Bellarine communities especially Barwon Heads & Ocean Grove. This includes: schools, churches, bus services, beaches, shops, entertainment, sporting facilities and clubs, doctors and aged care services, just to name a few. There is significant local growth and increased tourism, resulting in significant pressure on these schools, kindergartens, health facilities, public transport, roads, beaches and all public infrastructure. The pressures of growth on the local environment cannot be underestimated.

There are significant planning and traffic challenges which must be dealt with con-jointly with all levels of government. The recent process for the development of the Barwon Heads Bridge has highlighted the shared risks and brought together the two communities to consider the shared traffic, social and environmental challenges of the bridge development and the broader implications of this major project.

Ironically the physical barrier that the Committee identifies - the Barwon River - actually joins us together rather than separates us. The river provides the major threat as well as opportunities for the future of the two towns. The physical challenges of global warming will also have direct impacts on the Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove residents living on the Barwon River, which will require strong and united representation at all levels of government.

We see the growth to the west of Barwon Heads as a significant threat, and have lobbied long & hard to maintain our town boundaries. However as Armstrong Creek develops almost to our boundaries we rely on our Bellarine Community alliances and stable political representation across three levels of government to help us protect our precious part of Australia.

As a group we participate as a member of the Affiliation of Bellarine Community Associations which addresses many of the above matters. It is important to us that we can join together with like communities to communicate with and lobby our parliamentary representatives on matters of mutual interest, rather than be lost in a large and convoluted disaggregation of communities where we exist on the margins with little voice and few issues of shared concern.

We have little in common with the communities to our west (except maybe the little village of Breamlea with whom we share a postcode), and would be further disempowered in the redistribution you have recommended. We also note that the Australian Bureau of Statistics joins Ocean Grove-Barwon Heads as an Urban Centre/Locality for the purposes of data collection and analysis.

We urge you to reconsider the proposed distribution – and consider at least keeping Barwon Heads with Ocean Grove together.

Sandra Gatehouse
Secretary
Barwon Heads Association