



The Federal Redistribution 2010
Victoria



Objection Number 51

**Councillor Barbara Abley AM., DSJ, FRCNA, Brownbill Ward
Councillor, City of Greater Geelong**

3 pages

From: Barbara Abley [abley@geelongcity.vic.gov.au]
Sent: Friday, 27 August 2010 12:17 PM
To: VIC Redistribution
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Subject: Proposed 2010 Victorian Redistribution Submission
Attachments: OBJECTION TO PROPOSED VICTORIAN REDISTRIBUTION 2010.doc
Importance: High

** High Priority **

To the Committee

Re: the proposed changes to the Corangamite, Lalor and Corio electorate boundaries.

Please find attached my submission objecting to the above. I wish to state that this submission contains my personal views and has not been lodged on behalf of the City of Greater Geelong Council.

Regards

Barbara Abley

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OBJECTION TO PROPOSED VICTORIAN REDISTRIBUTION 2010 AUSTRALIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Date: 27 August 2010

I wish to lodge an objection to the proposed changes to the Corangamite, Lalor and Corio electorate boundaries.

Preamble

One of the crucial questions faced by the Fathers of Federation was how to ensure that all proposed States and Territories were going to be equally represented in the House of Representatives while at the same time, guarantee that each region of the country had a fair say in the daily workings of the new federation.

They adopted as a basic working principle, the idea of "representation by population," and determined that each State/Territory was to be allotted a number of seats in the House of Representatives that directly corresponded to its proportion of the total population.

From the start, however, **they recognised the importance of geographical, cultural, political and demographic diversity of the entire country, as well as population size and rural and urban characteristics.** Of course some regions grew and developed more than others, the diversity became more pronounced and a certain degree of compromise had to be built into the formula for allocating seats. As a result, the basic principle of representation by population began to evolve and the allocation formula for seats has changed several times since Federation to reflect this evolution.

So, where to draw the Lines?

A look at the guidelines makes it clear that the readjustment exercise is not simply a mathematical computation but, rather, a subtle balancing act that **must take into account human interests, regional identity, prosperity as well as geographic characteristics.**

A thorough examination of maps and documentation on the relevant population data from the most recent census does not support the proposed changes to Lalor, Corio or Corangamite Electorates. Further, it is highly disappointing and concerning to note that the proposal has the propensity to totally dislocate "like communities of interest" and to eradicate the healthy economic growth of the City of Greater Geelong and other co-located Local Government Areas. These LGA's have formed a long established and highly successful G21 alliance, all underpinned by the close working relationships and support of both the Corio and Corangamite electorates.

I understand that the committee is charged with dividing the territory assigned to them into a specified number of electoral districts, so that the population of each one will correspond as closely as is reasonably possible to the predetermined average (or "quotient").

But, in fixing the electoral district boundaries, the committee must also take into consideration the following: the community of interest(s), the community of identity long established in the historical pattern of an electoral district; and a manageable geographic size for districts in sparsely populated, rural or coastal regions.

The current electorate boundaries achieve all of the above as well as accommodating a wealth of hard won, carefully planned services for all of its residents (rural, urban, coastal) and business interests.

I believe that any alteration to existing boundaries will force disparate, confusing and untenable relationships particularly between our Lara, Little River and Anakie communities with those of

the Moorabool and Lalor areas. These two areas in particular have their own well-structured identities.

The suburbs including Lovely Banks, and townships of Lara, Avalon, Little River and Anakie and their farming communities have demonstrable, very close knit and strong links with all of Geelong and are dependent upon the city in many vital areas including health, education, economy, recreation, governance etc.

The Bellarine Peninsula townships, villages and farming communities will also suffer enormous disadvantage as they too are “communities of interest” with the same linkages to Geelong.

To consider ‘removing’ strong and growing employers and associated specialist businesses such as Geelong’s Avalon Airport across to another electorate is exceptionally short-sighted and most particularly untenable. Avalon Airport has one of the longest runways in the southern hemisphere which already provides direct, enormous opportunities and benefits for our region – as both a domestic (soon to be an international gateway) and freight terminal. The airport has a long established aerospace industry which is exceptionally well developed in maintenance, overhaul of RAAF and military aircraft, plus international and domestic aircraft. Geelong is the predominant supplier of technical expertise, engineering, spare parts etc. to this airport.

The region’s economic plan is an important driver for both our northern and southern suburbs, towns, villages and communities which encompass both the Corio and Corangamite electorates.

The City of Greater Geelong is the second city of the State of Victoria, and is the 12th largest in Australia. Its municipal boundaries fall neatly into the two electorates. It is a significant Australian region, and home to more than a quarter of a million people.

Proposed changes to the current status (Corio and Corangamite electorates) will not ensure equal representation in our Federal parliament nor guarantee that the people who live, work and play in our region will have a fair say in its daily workings.

Barbara Abley

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Ends.