



Suggestion 28

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Atn: Redistribution Committee for Victoria

AEC

Hope this short submission finds you well, I have lived in Kyneton for the past four years, and during that time have come to understand some of the “communities” and dynamics in our area. While professionally and personally, I have worked in and around government, this submission has no political lean or purpose, other than to encourage the redistribution committee to consider the “relationship” between several small towns crossing McEwen, Hawke, Ballarat, and Bendigo and to seek to ensure that those towns which share similar communities, services and activities are suitably addressed in the redistribution.

Macedon Ranges Shire Council in Victoria has several major towns, Gisborne, Kyneton, Lancefield, Malmsbury, and Romsey. At present the above towns, and single shire council is spread across three and potentially four Federal electorate districts. This causes substantial disadvantage to this community, as it is on the “edge” of four districts but is often an after thought given each of those electoral districts have a focus and a centre elsewhere.

As far as communities go, I regularly go to Gisborne or Woodend for shopping, activities, and volunteering, but they are in McEwen. Malmsbury only a very short distance up the road is in Ballarat, and Kyneton in Bendigo.

There is a common sense of community across Gisborne, Macedon, Woodend, Kyneton, Malmsbury, Lancefield and Romsey and I would strongly encourage the redistribution committee to consider this in relation to its boundary drafting. In an ideal world these similar communities – who share a common railroad from Melbourne, a common council, as well as share sporting, community, and other facilities – should be all contained within one district, and if not one district, then ideally two, as opposed to currently straddling four.

The current electoral divisions split community, council and similar interests, and there is no other regional or rural electorate in Victoria anywhere in the state which has four electorates meeting in such a small geographic area, and cutting a single council into so many pieces, all while ignoring the primary transit corridors of road and rail and the similarities of communities which straddle them.

Even compared to city districts, there is only a couple of instances in metropolitan Melbourne which have four electorates coming together at a point – notable Scullin/Calwell/wills/cooper and at a stretch Goldstein/Higgins/Hotham/Macnamara.

I would strongly urge the boundaries commission to consider the following when re drafting Victoria:

- To avoid splitting a single council area/single community across three/four seats as has happened in the Macedon ranges.
- Ensure that there are no points, let alone a single community, where four or more seats come together, given this creates differential outcomes for the communities involved.
- Bring the major towns which share similar identities and communities together – Kyneton, Malmsbury, Macedon, Woodend are all similar towns – serviced by road and rail, all semi-rural.
- Noting that while Gisborne is part of the above shire, it is effectively an outer urban centre, and thus may have different needs and requirements, and would better sit with Sunbury in similarities.

To achieve this outcome, it would be preferable to move Kyneton and Malmsbury entirely into McEwen, meaning Woodend, Macedon, Kyneton and Malmsbury, Romsey and Lancefield are all in the same electorate. An alternative would be to move all the above towns into Bendigo, or Hawke – however the current arrangement of splitting a Shire and single community into four districts is less than ideal. I am most happy to make myself available to talk further on this should it be of interest.

Regards

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