

OBJECTION

The Federal Redistribution 2009
NSW



Objection Number 160

by

Alan Jenkins

2 Pages

6 Piron Place
Woronora Heights NSW 2233
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Federal Redistribution Committee for New South Wales
Level 3, Roden Cutler House
PO Box K406
HAYMARKET NSW 1240

Dear Committee Chair,

I wish to make a submission objecting to the proposed electoral redistribution for the Federal Divisions of Hughes, Cook and Cunningham.

The proposal is for the electors in Bundeena and Maianbar to be transferred from the Federal Division of Cook to Cunningham and the electors in Heathcote and Waterfall to be transferred from the Federal Division of Hughes to Cunningham. This move would alienate the electors living in these areas from effective federal representation by removing them from their local community to a community that they have little economic, social, or geographical ties. It would also add cost and inconvenience to both the electors when seeking representation from their elected representative, and the elected representative whilst performing there electoral duties. It would also add unnecessary cost to the candidates at elections.

The move of these electors from Cook and Hughes to Cunningham contradicts the 2nd hierarchical order as listed in paragraphs 26 and 27 of the 2009 Report of the Redistribution Committee.

Bundeena, Maianbar, Heathcote and Waterfall are the southernmost communities of the Sutherland Shire. Thus they have strong "economic, social and regional interests" with the rest of the Sutherland Shire Local Government area. They have no or very little "economic, social and regional interests" with the City of Wollongong which is the focal point of the division of Cunningham.

Very few people who live in these areas commute south for employment.

Medical treatment for these communities is either local, elsewhere in the Sutherland Shire or to the other specialised medical facilities elsewhere in Sydney. Few if any would travel to the Wollongong area for medical treatment.

School Education is based around the Sutherland Shire; high school students travel to schools within the Sutherland Shire or others to the north rather than south.

Sporting competitions are focused within the Sutherland Shire thus there is very little sporting interaction with the City of Wollongong.

All other social interactions with these communities are within the Sutherland Shire and other areas of Sydney, few are to the south to the Wollongong region.

The "economic, social and regional" ties of Bundeena, Maianbar, Heathcote and Waterfall with the Sutherland Shire are strong due to there geographical location. There is considerable distance between these communities and the northern communities of the Wollongong City Local government area. This gap in urbanisation is caused by a natural barrier being National Parks, Water Catchment Areas and an escarpment.

The proposed change in Divisional boundaries would add more cost to the electorate. It would be uneconomic for the elected member to set up a satellite office in say Heathcote to better represent the electors as the number of electors is relatively small.

There would be increased expense by both the local member (eg: travel allowance) and the electors to attend functions, meetings and representations as the distance is far greater than the current arrangements. The elected representative would have increased travel time which could be better spent on other electoral matters. It is approximately 1 hours drive from the effected locations to Wollongong one way.

Alternatively, the use of public transport is even more time inefficient. There is no bus service from Heathcote, Bundeena etc to Wollongong. Electors from Heathcote who choose to travel to Wollongong by train need to use 2 trains as there is no direct train service. Electors of Bundeena and Maianbar who wish to travel by public transport to Wollongong would need to travel by ferry to Cronulla then train to Sutherland then change for a train to Wollongong. This would add an extra 2 hours one way on a journey to see their local elected federal representative. There is a bus service from Bundeena / Maianbar to Sutherland but this is infrequent.

I believe that the current boundaries between the Cook and Hughes Divisions with the Cunningham Division should stay (being the local government boundary between the Sutherland Shire and Wollongong City), so that the electors in Bundeena, Maianbar, Heathcote and Waterfall can continue to be given effective federal representation at a reasonable cost to the community.

Yours sincerely

Alan Jenkins