

PUBLIC SUGGESTION

The Federal Redistribution 2009
NSW



Public Suggestion Number 104

by

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8 Pages

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Sent: Thursday, 30 April 2009 1:48 PM
To: NSW Redistribution
Subject: Suggestions for the NSW Redistribution 2009
Attachments: NSW.doc

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Dear Committee Members,

Please find attached my submission for the 2009 redistribution of New South Wales.

I hope these suggestions can be of benefit to you in your deliberations. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

(Dr) Mark Mulcair



PROPOSED REDISTRIBUTION OF NEW SOUTH WALES 2009

General Strategy

The enrolment projections suggest the enrolment shortfall will be outside of Sydney. Even with the abolition of a seat in rural NSW last time, many seats in this region are still under quota. In contrast, Sydney seats are generally well within tolerance, and those that are outside tolerance can be adjusted with neighbouring divisions. Despite the criticism the Committee received at the last redistribution, the continued low growth in rural NSW indicates the decision to abolish a rural seat was the correct one.

Unfortunately, it seems rural NSW must once again bear the brunt of a redistribution. There are two distinct regions of low growth where divisions are under quota. One is the coastal area south of Sydney; with Hughes, Cunningham, Throsby and Gilmore outside the projected tolerance and Cook at the very low end. However, the shortfall is not significant enough to easily accommodate loss of a division, and geographical constraints such as the escarpment and coastline make it difficult to transfer electors to neighbouring divisions.

The other region of low growth is in the rural divisions west of the Great Divide. Although a seat was abolished in this area last time, I suggest that once again this area lose a seat. Parkes and Calare in particular are well under quota; however, due to their large area, neither of these are good candidates for abolition. Instead, I suggest Riverina and Hume be amalgamated, with the surplus allowing the enrolment shortfall in both the South Coast and rural north-west to be accommodated.

The sparsely populated north and west of the state does make drawing coherent boundaries for Parkes and Calare very difficult. I have proposed the return of Broken Hill and the remote north-west to Parkes, with Calare expanding along the Lachlan River into the south-west of the state. While this would greatly expand the area of Parkes, there are obvious links between Dubbo and the north-western shires, and the community of interest throughout my proposed Parkes would remain strong.

I acknowledge and have some sympathy with the feeling that rural areas get the short straw at redistributions. However, given the relative stability of Sydney, the alternative strategy of abolishing a metropolitan seat and moving the rural divisions inward is not really practical. In addition, it seems more logical to move seats such as Macarthur and Hughes into surrounding rural areas than to push Hume or Cunningham into the outskirts of Sydney. It should be noted that although a rural division is abolished, my proposals increase the rural component of Hunter, Macquarie, Macarthur and Hughes. In addition, a further ten rural shires (Port Stephens, Upper Hunter, Gwydir, Lithgow, Bathurst Regional, Hawkesbury, Central Darling, Kiama, Palerang and Wollondilly) are united in my submission, while only two currently intact rural shires are split (Yass Valley and Cessnock).

In rural areas, I have been guided by LGA boundaries, while in urban areas I have aligned boundaries to major roads, rivers and suburb boundaries wherever possible. In Sydney, I have made small changes to a number of divisions that already are within tolerance, in order to unite a suburb or adopt a stronger, more obvious boundary (*e.g.* Banks, Grayndler, Mackellar and Wentworth).

Proposals

Richmond and **Page** are within tolerance and no changes are required. Since it is not possible to unite Ballina or Clarence Valley LGAs, I suggest community interest is best served maintaining the existing boundaries rather than making a new split.

Cowper is also within quota, and I recommend it be left unchanged. By maintaining the existing southern boundary at Kempsey, **Lyne** can neatly be brought up to quota by gaining Gloucester LGA from Paterson. **Paterson** can then regain the remainder of Port Stephens LGA from Newcastle, using the strong southern boundary of the Hunter River.

I acknowledge there is a very strong case for the transfer of the remainder of Kempsey LGA from Lyne to Cowper, since Cowper can accommodate this change without going outside tolerance. However, given Lyne is already under quota, the flow-on effects of this transfer seem to outweigh the benefits. Lyne would be forced to gain more electors from Paterson, almost certainly resulting in Great Lakes LGA being split, with Paterson then needing to encroach further on Maitland or force a new split of Newcastle. I suggest this causes too much trouble simply to unite one shire.

Newcastle, with the loss to Paterson, needs to gain electors. Rather than a further split of Maitland, I suggest the suburbs of Maryland and Fletcher be transferred from Charlton. **Charlton**, already at the very low end of tolerance, then gains Kurri Kurri and surrounds from Hunter. Although this splits Cessnock LGA, Kurri Kurri has links to western Newcastle and the Lake Macquarie district (the areas are linked at state level), and fits quite well with the remainder of Charlton.

Shortland, **Dobell** and **Robertson** are within tolerance, and I recommend they be left unchanged.

The loss to Charlton leaves **Hunter** under quota, and I suggest it gain Mid Western LGA from Parkes. **New England** can then be easily brought within tolerance by uniting Gwydir LGA in the division. While Liverpool Plains has a case for transfer into Hunter, there are insufficient electors in the LGA to bring Hunter within tolerance, meaning Hunter would need to encroach further on Tamworth. This would then force New England to undergo more significant changes to achieve tolerance, which would in turn have greater impact on Parkes and Calare. Mid Western LGA has been linked with the Upper Hunter region at federal and state level in the past, and part of the LGA is currently in the state division of Upper Hunter.

Parkes is already under quota and with the transfers to Hunter and New England needs to gain a significant number of electors. Since Parkes already contains Dubbo, I suggest it gain Narromine, Warren, Bogan, Brewarrina, Bourke and Cobar LGAs from Calare. These north-western shires look to Dubbo as their major centre, so it is logical to place them in the same division as Dubbo. I also suggest Broken Hill and surrounds (Central Darling LGA and the Unincorporated Far West) be transferred from Farrer and Calare. This area has previously been linked with Dubbo and the division of Parkes, and has little if any connection with the remainder of Farrer. The Mitchell, Newell and Barrier Highways would act as major links through the proposed division.

I acknowledge that these gains would significantly increase the physical size of Parkes, and the Committee at the last redistribution emphasised reducing the area of divisions. However, the community of interest between the remote north and west and the remainder of Parkes is quite strong, certainly stronger than with Orange (Calare) or Albury (Farrer).

It is not clear from the maps I have why a small number of electors in Upper Hunter and Lithgow LGAs remain in Parkes. These areas should be reunited with the remainder of their shire in Hunter and Macquarie, respectively.

Calare makes the above transfer to Parkes and sheds the remaining part of Bathurst Regional LGA to Macquarie. It then expands south and west to gain Young LGA from Hume, Bland and most of Carrathool (north and west of Griffith LGA) from Riverina, and Wentworth, Balranald and Hay LGAs from Farrer. This division would be clearly focused on the Lachlan River, and would be linked by the Mid Western and Sturt Highways.

Having lost the Broken Hill region, **Farrer** gains the MIA shires of Murrumbidgee, Griffith, Leeton, Narrandera, plus a small portion of Carrathool from Riverina. To bring Farrer within tolerance, Lockhart LGA is placed with Wagga Wagga in my proposed division of Hume.

Riverina is abolished, with **Hume** gaining the remaining parts of the division, plus Lockhart LGA from Farrer. Hume then sheds the remainder of Wollondilly LGA to Macarthur, Wingecarribee LGA to Throsby, and the balance of Palerang LGA to Eden-Monaro. These changes leave Hume slightly outside tolerance, so part of Yass Valley LGA along the border of the ACT (the former Yarrowlumla LGA) can be accommodated in Eden-Monaro. This area has previously been in Eden-Monaro, and towns such as Sutton fit well with Queanbeyan and Bungendore.

Although the division contains more electors from Riverina than Hume, it no longer contains the MIA region and its boundaries are closer to those of the traditional Hume. Therefore I suggest the division be named 'Hume'.

Eden-Monaro is within tolerance after the gain from Hume, and needs no further change. **Gilmore** can be brought up to quota very neatly by gaining the balance of Kiama LGA from Throsby. **Throsby** then gains all of Wingecarribee LGA from Hume. Towns such as Robertson and Moss Vale have previously been linked with the coast at Kiama in the seat of Gilmore, and since the Illawarra Highway directly links Moss Vale and Albion Park (currently in Throsby), it seems no less sensible to place these towns in Throsby than in Gilmore. The low growth in the South Coast does mean one division needs to look outside the coastal strip to gain electors. Given the disruption to Cunningham, Cook, Hughes and the south-west Sydney divisions if Throsby pushes further north, I submit my proposed arrangement is the best outcome.

This gain puts Throsby over quota, and **Cunningham** then needs to push south. A very neat boundary can be achieved by using the inlet of Lake Illawarra, which also serves as the boundary between Wollongong and Shellharbour LGAs. Therefore I suggest transferring all of Wollongong LGA on the north and east side of the lake (generally east of Mullet Creek and the Kembla Grange suburb boundary) to

Cunningham. This region includes Port Kembla, Cringila, Berkeley, Warrawong, Primbee and Windang. Cunningham then sheds everything from Thirroul northwards to Hughes. I suggest the boundary run from Lake Cataract along Appin Road, the Princes Highway and Thirroul suburb boundary. The northern part of Illawarra has previously been in Hughes, and is linked by road and rail to Sutherland Shire.

Hughes, with the gain from Cunningham, can return all of Liverpool LGA west of the Georges River to Fowler. Liverpool is the major centre for the suburbs currently within Fowler, and there was some objection to its placement in Sutherland-based Hughes at the last redistribution. **Cook** is at the low end of tolerance, but given it has strong and sensible boundaries, I recommend no changes.

Macquarie remains within tolerance after gaining the balance of Bathurst Regional LGA. As with Parkes, the maps I have don't suggest why a small number of Hawkesbury LGA electors remain in Macquarie. Unless they would be physically cut off from the rest of the division, I suggest they be reunited with the balance of Hawkesbury LGA in Greenway. **Greenway** is at the higher end of tolerance, and given its strong growth I suggest returning its share of Penrith LGA (Londonderry and surrounds) to Lindsay. **Lindsay** also gains the small part of Penrith LGA currently in Fowler (Wallacia area). These changes leave Penrith LGA split between two divisions instead of four. **Chifley** is well within tolerance and remains unchanged.

Mackellar is at the low end of tolerance, and I suggest moving the boundary south from Pacific Parade to Headland Road, a more significant road which is also the Dee Why suburb boundary. With this loss, Warringah needs to gain electors.

At the last redistribution, the Committee decided against Warringah moving westward into North Sydney LGA because it would split Cremorne and Neutral Bay. However, the alternative proposed was even worse; forcing a second crossing of Middle Harbour and detaching a long, narrow strip of Killara, Lindfield and Roseville. These areas clearly have far greater links with the remainder of their suburb in Bradfield than across Roseville Bridge. In contrast, Neutral Bay and Cremorne fit well with Mosman LGA and would not be out of place in Warringah.

I suggest that **Warringah** shed its share of Willoughby and Ku-ring-gai LGAs to North Sydney and Bradfield respectively. It then moves westwards into North Sydney LGA, gaining everything east of the Bradfield Highway, Warringah Freeway and Cremorne suburb boundary. This area includes Cremorne, Cremorne Point, Neutral Bay, and Kirribilli. **North Sydney**, having already gained part of Willoughby LGA from Warringah, then gains the balance of Willoughby from Bradfield, uniting the council in one division.

Bennelong is within tolerance and requires no change. The exchange with Warringah and North Sydney leaves **Bradfield** needing around 10,000 electors. Since the existing boundary at Hornsby runs along the Pacific Highway, I suggest continuing the boundary south along the highway to the M2 motorway, transferring Normanhurst, Cheltenham, Beecroft, and parts of Pennant Hills and Thornleigh. **Berowra** then moves the boundary with Mitchell to Cattai Creek and Showgrounds Road, transferring Glenhaven, Annangrove, Kenthurst and parts of Castle Hill.

I note at previous redistributions a small part of Hornsby LGA has remained in Mitchell due to the wishes of Anglican Retirement Village to remain with Castle Hill. Since large parts of Castle Hill are now in Berowra, it is logical to place this area in Berowra, reducing by one the number of divisions into which Hornsby is split.

Mitchell, having shed around 15,000 electors to Berowra, gains from Parramatta in the south. The boundary can be straightened along Windsor Road, Church Street and Pennant Hills Road. This transfers all but a small part of Baulkham Hills LGA to Mitchell, and unites North Rocks in one division. **Parramatta** then regains part of the territory ceded to Reid at the last redistribution. The starting point should be to regain everything north of the Parramatta River, including Rydalmere and Dundas. Around Parramatta, the boundary can be straightened along Church Street and the Great Western Highway; returning Wentworthville, Westmead, and more of the Parramatta CBD to Parramatta.

Wentworth is within tolerance; however I suggest two small changes to its boundaries. In Randwick, the boundary with Kingsford Smith can be moved south from King Street/Stanley Street to Alison Road to provide a more obvious split of the area. In the west, I suggest a clearer boundary with Sydney can be formed by extending the existing boundary along South Dowling Street, then Victoria Street, William Street and the Eastern Distributor. This returns East Sydney and areas adjacent to the Sydney CBD to Sydney.

These changes leave both **Kingsford Smith** and **Sydney** within tolerance, and no other changes are needed. I suggest the existing boundary between the two divisions at Epsom Road be maintained to keep all of Rosebery within Kingsford Smith.

Grayndler requires no changes, but I propose a very small adjustment around Croydon. I submit that Malvern Avenue/Croydon Road and Brighton Avenue are more significant boundaries than Dickinson Avenue and Hay Street. This change would transfer a very small number of electors in Croydon and Croydon Park into Grayndler. **Lowe** can then extend west to Duck River, north of the Western Motorway, to gain Homebush Bay, Newington and Silverwater from Reid. **Reid** is currently over quota, but with losses to Lowe and Parramatta needs to gain electors. This can be neatly achieved by moving the boundary with Prospect west to Cumberland Highway, and gaining the part of Holroyd LGA currently in Blaxland. This unites Merrylands, Merrylands West, Guildford and Guildford West within Reid.

Banks is within tolerance; however I suggest an adjustment be made to the boundary with Watson. The last redistribution detached a small part of Penshurst to Watson; this area should be returned by moving the eastern boundary back to King Georges Road, which is a far more obvious boundary than Penshurst Street. **Barton** has clear boundaries and remains unchanged, while the loss to Banks still leaves **Watson** within tolerance.

Blaxland, after its losses to Reid, can be brought within tolerance by moving its western boundary from Gladstone Street to the Cumberland Highway, gaining the balance of Cabramatta and more of Canley Heights. **Prospect** then extends its southern boundary with Fowler along Elizabeth Drive and Smithfield Road to Orphan

School Creek, transferring the balance of Abbotsbury plus Edensor Park and Greenfield Park.

Fowler returns its share of Wollondilly LGA to Macarthur and loses the above territory to Prospect and Blaxland. It can then regain the Liverpool CBD and surrounds from Hughes, returning to the strong boundary of Georges River. This still leaves Fowler around 10,000 electors under quota, so I suggest the boundary extend along Bringelly Road and Camden Valley Way to Cabramatta Creek, transferring West Hoxton, Hoxton Park and Horningsea Park from Werriwa.

Werriwa loses the above electors and gains more of Campbelltown from Macarthur. I suggest it gain the Campbelltown CBD, Leumeah, Kentlyn and Ruse, using Narellan Road, Oxley Street, Broughton Street, and Georges River Road as the boundary. **Macarthur** then makes the previously mentioned gains from Fowler and Hume, uniting Wollondilly LGA within the division. These gains and the loss to Werriwa leave Macarthur within tolerance.