



The Federal Redistribution 2009
QUEENSLAND



Objection Number 63

Terry Cullen

2 pages

From: Terry CULLEN [terrycullen@goosegully.com]
Sent: Friday, 14 August 2009 11:51 AM
To: QLD Redistribution
Subject: Proposed Redistribution 2009 - Wide Bay Electorate

AEC

Principally as an intending Boreen Point resident who would be affected by this proposal and one who has experienced the effects of the matters raised herein, I make my objection to the proposal in respect of the boundaries of Wide Bay.

The redistribution, such as it is, fails to correct or fairly deal with existing and obvious faults in respect of the Statutory requirements with which the AEC is charged to comply. Specifically, it does not properly reflect the required community of interest and subsets thereof in Section 66(3) and the rationalisation is weak to the point of being, I suggest, spurious.

As a resident of Mooloolah Qld 4553 since 1992, I have seen firsthand the effects of failures by such redistribution exercises by each both State and Commonwealth level which has moved this location between electorates, most recent that - in terms of State Electorates - removing it from its natural community of interest (Mooloolah) with the Sunshine Coast and part of the (former) local government area, the City of Caloundra into Glasshouse, effectively an appendage of Caboolture some 50kilometres to the south. As forecast in my objection at the time, the elected representative would establish his/her office in Caboolture, and the consequential distortion of interest. On any reasonable geographic basis, there was no sound justification for this decision and it was only recently corrected (but even then initially not without poor application of what is on the ground, fixed eventually on my objection).

In the case of Wide Bay, there is not and never was a community of interest between the Wide Bay & Burnett area and the (former) Noosa Shire Council area. As in the aforementioned case of the State Electorate of Glasshouse, the elected representative reflects the overwhelming geo politic character of the prescribed area and has chosen to base himself in Maryborough. As a town planner (and well-travelled in this country at that), I can attest to the dissimilarity between that place and the Noosa Heads region. In amalgamating Noosa Shire into the Sunshine Coast Regional local government and ignoring Gympie Region - which "wedges" between Maryborough and the Noosa Heads (which includes the Noosa River catchment), the State recognised this point which, I contend to use the colloquial phrase, is "bleeding obvious".

Along with distance between Maryborough and Noosa Heads are intervening major geo-physical barriers, disparate socio-economic and recognisable cultural community identities and distinct and identifiable geographic and economic regions in existence.

If, over time, the elected representative becomes beholden to the character of that population based on Noosa Heads, then this would be to the disadvantage of those in the other part. This proposal therefore is a disbenefit to at least two distinctly different communities, now and into the near future and boundary separation would inevitably have to be brought to bear when that population pressure highlights this fact and political pressure becomes unpalatable. Administrative expedience should be put aside and this should be done right now.

It is unfortunate that the AEC has not revealed in its justifications what alternatives were considered and I cannot but presume in the circumstances that none of the necessarily more radical solutions were seriously contemplated (as elsewhere), with an easy route followed, in this instance.

I propose that the Division of Wide Bay no longer contained any part of the Queensland local government area described as the Sunshine Coast Regional Council and to make up its numbers from such areas as more fittingly resemble its community of interest. This part should be incorporated in that electorate to the south and such adjustments to others as this entails were made.

The naming of this electorate, Wide Bay, holds the truth of its community of interest - part of the region of Wide Bay and Burnett.

Once again, I contend that this proposal has almost wholly been an exercise in managing numbers which has been to the detriment of the interest of citizens affected and does not properly satisfy the provisions of Section 66(3) as is required by the Parliament and expected by these Australians.

Yours faithfully

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