



The Federal Redistribution 2009
QUEENSLAND



**Comment Number 8
on Objections**

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5 pages

From: Mark Mulcair [markmulcair@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, 2 September 2009 6:01 PM
To: QLD Redistribution
Subject: Comments on Objections for the Queensland redistribution
Attachments: COMMENTS ON OBJECTIONS TO QUEENSLAND REDISTRIBUTION.doc

Dear Committee Members,

Please find attached my comments on the objections to the 2009 Queensland redistribution.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or problems.

Regards,

Dr Mark Mulcair.

COMMENTS ON OBJECTIONS TO QUEENSLAND REDISTRIBUTION

Although there are a significant number of objections to this redistribution, they can generally be broken down into a small number of groups:

1) Objections to the transfer of Kuranda and/or Edmonton to Kennedy:

A number of Objections propose retaining Kuranda and/or Edmonton in Leichhardt. I acknowledge the links between these areas (particularly Edmonton) and Cairns, but the reality is Leichhardt is over quota and needs to lose electors. I note that very few of the objections suggest an alternative means for Leichhardt to achieve tolerance.

2) Objections to the transfer of Annandale and surrounds to Dawson:

The sheer number of objections highlights the strong feeling against this change, but again, very few suggest an alternative means for Kennedy, Herbert and Dawson to remain within tolerance. I am sure the Townsville area has a strong community of interest, but the numbers do not permit the entire city to be placed in one division. Some of Townsville will need to go into Kennedy and/or Dawson.

I note several objections highlight the link between Annandale and Lavarack Barracks. The proposals of Mr Bob Richardson and the LNP for keeping Annandale in Herbert are discussed below. My own Objection 3 proposed placing Lavarack Barracks as well as Annandale in Dawson. I acknowledge that this is basically the opposite of what the objectors are arguing for, but it would at least keep these two communities together in the same division with minimal changes elsewhere.

3) Objections to placing Dayboro in Longman:

A number of individuals and local MP Mr Dutton object to placing Dayboro in Longman. However, the only alternatives for Longman to achieve tolerance are to split Deception Bay or make a further messy split of the Kallangur area. In contrast, I recommended in my Objection 5 that more of the Dayboro area be placed in Longman, allowing all of Kallangur and Dakabin to be united in Dickson.

I note several objections highlight the links between Dayboro and communities such as Laceys Creek and Armstrong Creek that are proposed to remain in Dickson. Again, while I acknowledge this is the opposite of what the objectors want, adopting my Objection 5 would at least keep these rural communities around Lake Samsonvale together in one division (Longman).

4) Objections from Mr Bob Richardson:

Mr Richardson objects not only to the redistribution, but also many of the original Suggestions and Comments. I note that he takes issue with my criticism of his Suggestion, but I think he has misunderstood my point. Taken in isolation, I had no problem with his proposed division of Fulton, and I understand his logic in improving community of interest in North Queensland. It was the consequential massive impact his new seat would have had on surrounding rural seats that was the problem. The Committee needs to deal with the entire state, and while Mr Richardson's proposals are fine in his own local area, this comes at the expense of logical boundaries elsewhere.

In addition, I would submit that Mr Richardson's continued use of his submissions to cast aspersions against the LNP and others with whom he disagrees is not appropriate. There are plenty of more suitable forums out there for him to grind his personal or political axe.

All that said, I do commend Mr Richardson's adjustment to the boundary between Dawson and Herbert, keeping Annandale in Herbert and transferring South Townsville to Dawson. This is a very neat boundary, and I would recommend it in preference to my own objection if it does not impact too greatly on surrounding seats.

5) Objection from Mr Martin Gordon:

Many of Mr Gordon's objections have merit, but tend to involve significant changes to the Committee's proposals. If the Committee were prepared to consider a major change, I would certainly recommend Mr Gordon's proposals for Blair and Wright. This change would enable Lockyer Valley RC to remain with Ipswich in Blair, provides a clear split of Ipswich, and removes the awkward narrow connection between the two halves of Wright.

My own Objection 1 to Blair and Wright could also be considered if the Committee was reluctant to make a major change to these two divisions.

I do not support Mr Gordon's proposals in Northern Brisbane, as it would result in a further split of the Kallangur area, and have Dickson straddle both Moreton Bay and Brisbane Councils. It would seem more logical to confine Dickson to the former Pine Rivers LGA by gaining the balance of Kallangur and Dakabin from Longman (as stated in my Objection 5).

6) Objection from Ms Kate Townsend:

The proposals from Ms Townsend for Longman, Dickson, Petrie and Lilley are very similar to those of Mr Gordon, and for the same reasons I do not support them.

Ms Townsend also proposes pushing Ryan even further into Enoggera, with additional parts of Bardon and Auchenflower transferred into Brisbane. My proposals are basically the exact opposite of this, and I have outlined previously why I believe the western parts of Brisbane are a better fit in Ryan than the Enoggera/Ferny Grove region.

7) Objections of the ALP and its MPs:

The ALP provides one of the many objections to the removal of Kuranda from Leichhardt. Despite the links between Kuranda and Cairns, the use of the Tablelands Council boundary would seem to be a clear and logical boundary in this region. I also note that, in isolation, returning the Kuranda area would put Leichhardt near the very top of tolerance, and the ALP offers no compensating transfer out of Leichhardt.

The ALP also laments the transfer of Annandale to Dawson, and the placement of further parts of Mackay RC to Capricornia. I again draw the Committee's attention to the proposals of Mr Richardson and my own Objection 3.

The ALP proposes, as I do, to transfer the remaining parts of Dalby RC from Flynn to Maranoa. The related point regarding South Burnett-Wondai cannot be upheld without Flynn falling outside tolerance.

Mr Swan objects to the boundary between Lilley and Petrie, citing the strong links between Brighton, Sandgate, Deagon and the remainder of Lilley. While this argument has merit, the boundary proposed by the Committee is strong and easily understood; certainly it is better than deviating southward to include Carseldine and Fitzgibbon in Petrie. There has been a clear determination by the Committee to reduce the elongated north-south nature of Petrie, and in that context I submit the addition of Brighton and Sandgate is defensible.

Mr Bevis objects to the boundary between Brisbane and Ryan. I note that my Objection 6 would (indirectly) deal with the problems he raises, by moving the boundary much further east to Hale Street. If the Committee did not wish to make such a major change, Mr Bevis' use of more significant roads in the Toowong and Ashgrove areas should be considered.

Both the ALP itself and its local MPs object, as I do, to the boundary of Blair and Oxley through Collingwood Park. However, they propose placing more of the suburb in Blair instead of uniting the suburb in Oxley. I submit that the existing boundary along Six Mile Creek is a clearer boundary than that proposed by the Committee or the ALP, and recommend consideration of my Objection 8. The ALP's other adjustment through Redbank Plains seems sensible enough and should be upheld.

8) Objections of the LNP and its MPs

The LNP Objection leads off with criticisms about the redistribution's political impact. I am sure the conservative parties feel they have drawn the short straw at recent redistributions, but the fact remains that the Committee does not and can not consider the politics of redistributions. Raising the issue is not appropriate and is unlikely to achieve anything constructive.

As with many others, the LNP opposes the placement of Annandale in Dawson. However, their compensating transfers involve a third division (Kennedy), and places part of Charters Towers in Dawson. Charters Towers should remain united in Kennedy, and Mr Katter MP has highlighted numerous times why the town is an important focal point of his division.

The LNP's proposals for Capricornia, Flynn and Hinkler have merit and should be seriously considered. Gracemere clearly has a stronger link with Rockhampton than with the bulk of Flynn, and should be accommodated in Capricornia. I also support the transfer of North Bundaberg to Flynn, and believe the Burnett River would be a clear boundary through the Bundaberg area. Since the northern part of Bundaberg RC is in Flynn anyway, North Bundaberg would not be out of place in that division.

However, in keeping with the principle of uniting rural shires, I do not agree with the proposal to return Biggenden to Hinkler. North Burnett RC should remain together in Flynn. I note that Hinkler is proposed to be set at the very top of tolerance, so it can accommodate the loss of North Bundaberg to Flynn without the need for any compensating gains.

The LNP's objection to the placing of Barcaldine and Blackall-Tambo in Maranoa is strange, given many individuals and organisations in the area were happy to go into Maranoa. This change seems to have been proposed mainly as a means to compensate Flynn for the loss of Biggenden. Since I recommend Biggenden remain in Flynn, there is no need for any compensating transfer from Maranoa.

The proposal from the LNP and its local MPs to adjust the boundary between Fairfax and Fisher around Palmwoods seems sensible enough, and given the small number of electors involved should be adopted. Other objections proposing more significant change in the area have too great an impact on surrounding divisions.

The LNP proposes a similar re-arrangement of northern Brisbane to Mr Gordon and Ms Townsend, and I have made my thoughts on this fairly clear above. I do note the LNP lodges a similar objection as Mr Bevis to the boundary between Brisbane and Ryan.

It is not clear why the LNP objects to the boundary between Forde and Bowman, given the new boundary removes the last remaining parts of Logan Council from Bowman. I recommend the Committee's proposals for Bowman be adopted without change.

9) Objections to naming the new division 'Wright':

There are a number of objections to the name 'Wright', some of which raise the issue of former Capricornia MP and convicted sex offender Keith Wright. I can certainly understand why residents of Central Queensland would strongly object to the name in 2006, but I am not sure 'Wright' has the same negative connotations in south-east Queensland. If the Committee still felt the name would cause confusion and anger, there were a number of suitable names in the original Suggestions (including my own proposal of 'Gair') which they may wish to consider.