



The Federal Redistribution 2009
QUEENSLAND



Public Suggestion Number 2

Mary Killeen

4 pages

From: Andrew Pegler & Mary Killeen [outbackaqua@bigpond.com]
Sent: Friday, 17 April 2009 5:17 PM
To: QLD Redistribution
Subject: Queensland Electoral Redistribution Submission
Attachments: AEC Maranoa Redistribution Submission 2009.doc

Importance: High

Navarra
ISISFORD Q 4731

17 April 2009

To

Electoral Redistribution Committee

Please find attached my submission regarding the proposed electoral redistribution.

I understand the closing date for such correspondence is 24 April 2009.

Thank you

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The Redistribution Committee for Queensland
GPO Box 2590
BRISBANE Q 4001

ELECTORAL REDISTRIBUTION FOR QUEENSLAND

As a consequence of the last federal electoral redistribution held in 2006, many electors in the seat of Maranoa were relocated to the new seat of Flynn.

At that time, the Redistribution Committee received a number of submissions requesting that this not happen. The reasons for these requests are still as valid and important as they were in 2006 and since that time, some communities have been further decimated and disadvantaged by the Queensland Labor Government's forced shire amalgamations.

This letter is to request that the western regions formally located in the Federal Seat of Maranoa be returned to Maranoa. It is hoped that the Redistribution Committee will honour their pledge to "Consider communities of interest and means of communications and travel within the proposed divisions." (AEC Press release 26 March 2009)

I request that my community of interest, as part of the shires of western Queensland – The Outback – be reinstated in the Maranoa Electorate.

It is my understanding the under the Commonwealth Electoral Act, individual electorates are to contain "a community of interest" including economic, social and regional interests and "shared means of travel." While we have been located in the seat of Flynn, we have been disenfranchised from our community of interest.

The former electorate of Maranoa was culturally, economically and socially cohesive. We have nothing in common with a large, coastal, industrial city such as Gladstone. **Maranoa is based on primary production, not heavy industrial and mining.** The selling centres of Roma and Longreach (just to name two) to which we are connected by

the Landsborough and Warrego Highways are certainly **not** directed towards Gladstone in the east.

The needs of people located in the central and southwest are very different from those of our coastal cousins. **The former electorate of Maranoa provided a wonderful base for a unified approach to finding practical solutions to problems and the continued economic sustainability of the region as a whole.**

The small rural communities located in Maranoa are currently facing challenges in areas such as communication, road infrastructure, education, health and long-term economic sustainability. Many are in a state of turmoil and instability owing to forced shire amalgamation. In many cases the people are no longer represented by councillors who have an understanding of, and are in touch with, the issues of small, geographically isolated communities.

People elect their local council members to represent them, their well-being and the betterment of their community as a whole. These elected councillors bring with them a grass-roots knowledge of their communities and shires. However with the newly amalgamated shires, there is no guarantee of this continuing to happen, when small shires were consumed by larger ones with a far greater population. Surely we are entitled to be represented federally by a member who is familiar with our locality and understands the challenges we face.

These issues are very different in nature to those faced by a large city such as Gladstone, with its huge port and many heavy industries. Having our federal representative based here causes fragmentation and further highlights the ripple effect of geographic isolation.

Our links for health services, social activities, tourism, education and business (just to name a few) having nothing to do with Gladstone. There is not even a direct road, air or rail link to Gladstone, with which we have little or no common areas of interest.

The people need to be fairly represented. Currently it would appear that the rural and remote voters on the western and southern fringes of the electoral of Flynn are the forgotten minority. There is little need for the elected member to pay much attention at all to areas west of Emerald as the population located to the east will dictate who wins the seat and as such, their concerns will attract the priority attention of the sitting MP.

It is imperative that the concerns of the outback community be understood and responded to in a favourable manner. There are enough issues which people face on a daily basis, without also having to cope with political representation by someone who has no “common ground” with most of the community and owing to population demographics, does not really need to discover any.

Just because we are few in number does not (or at least should not) lessen our importance as members of this great nation we are proud to call home.

Many people requested that we not be moved into Flynn in 2006. Our requests were ignored. Three years on, it is obvious that our concerns have been vindicated.

When the committee is finalising the proposed redistribution of Federal Electoral Boundaries for Queensland, I would appreciate you taking these concerns into consideration **and relocating the western regions formally located in the Federal Seat of Maranoa back to Maranoa.**

Yours faithfully,

Mary Killeen