



THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
QUEENSLAND

Objection Number 11

Dean Ashley

2 pages

DEAN ASHLEY: Objection to the Proposed Redistribution of Queensland

COMMENTS

The vast majority of the changes proposed by the Committee are excellent choices once the determination was made (para 67 of the committee's report) that adverse impacts on other divisions prevented more significant changes to unify regional cities as suggested by myself and some others.

That determination itself is defensible and my own suggestion acknowledged that moving the Mount Isa region into Maranoa to accommodate other changes was an imperfect outcome, albeit arguably justified by the improvements elsewhere.

My only comment regarding the overall approach taken is a theoretical concern with a concept in paragraph 68 of the report, namely the suggestion that "minimal alterations to electoral division boundaries" are to be preferred to the "significant alteration to the geographical size of electoral divisions" that can be necessary when making changes in rural areas.

My concern is that while existing boundaries, the area of the division and means of travel are all relevant considerations for the redistribution (sections 66(3)(b)(ii), (iv) and (v) of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*), there may still be circumstances where moving 5000 electors in a vast swathe of countryside does much more to unite communities of interest than the tidier option of tweaking a boundary through suburbia, and does so without creating difficulties around travel or overall area.

As mentioned, this concern is essentially theoretical and centred in the language adopted. It is not the basis of my solitary objection below and I have not identified any glaring examples in the proposal where moving a larger geographical area would clearly lead to a superior outcome.

OBJECTION

My only objection is to the proposed boundary between Blair and Ryan, with potential implications for the Ryan-Brisbane and Brisbane-Lilley boundaries.

Having the Division of Blair extend across both the Brisbane River and the boundary between Brisbane City Council and Ipswich City is an unnecessary erosion of the communities of interest defined by those boundaries.

While the area proposed to be transferred from Ryan to Blair is the obvious candidate (for the reasons identified in paragraph 100 of the Report), if such a transfer is necessary, paragraph 101 acknowledges that the change is being made primarily for numerical reasons.

The requirement for Ryan to lose electors to Blair is created by the transfer of 2,880 projected electors from Brisbane to Ryan to bring the former division back within tolerance. My objection arises from the fact that there are equally satisfactory alternatives to bring Brisbane within tolerance, without then requiring a sub-optimal transfer from Ryan to Blair.

These alternatives include a smaller transfer from Brisbane to Ryan (Brisbane can shed as few as 1,402 projected electors, while Ryan can gain up to 2,654) and/or having Brisbane transfer some electors to Lilley, which can gain up to 3,441 projected electors after shedding electors to Dickson as proposed.

My own suggestion was for Brisbane to transfer 1,277 projected electors to Ryan (comprising a small area north of the railway and west of South Pine Road / Wardell St in the Gaythorne and Enoggera localities) and 729 projected electors to Lilley (the area north of Kedron Brook and west of Webster Road).

The transfer to Ryan suggested above is a subset of the area that the Committee has proposed to transfer and a further alternative (instead of a transfer to Lilley) would be to opt for a larger subset by using Wardell St as the boundary only as far south as Lloyd St, which it would then follow west to the existing boundary. This area contains 1,642 projected electors, i.e. enough to bring Brisbane into tolerance without putting Ryan outside it and requiring the objectionable transfer to Blair.

An image of this alternative Brisbane-Ryan transfer is highlighted orange in the below.

