



# Objection 320

Hon J N Andrew AO

2 pages

**From:** Neil Andrew [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 11 May 2018 5:51 PM  
**To:** FedRedistribution - SA  
**Subject:** Wakefield as an electoral name. [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Dear Commissioners,

I write as a former member for the Electorate of Wakefield, to seek a reconsideration of the Commissions reported recommendation to remove the name of Wakefield from the list of Federal Electorate names in South Australia.

Obviously, my enthusiasm for the retention of "Wakefield" as an electorate name is in part driven by the simple fact that I was fortunate to represent the area from 1983 to 2004 and to have the honour of being elected as Speaker of the House of Representatives for two terms during my tenure.

Incidentally, in a quirk of both history and the electoral processes, the inaugural Speaker of the House of Representatives, Sir Frederick Holder, was the Member for Wakefield and 100 years later on the occasion of the centenary of Federation, I was fortunate to be Speaker.

Much more significantly, the electorate has been served by Parliamentarians who have made a unique contribution to our nation's security and prosperity. The most notable of these would be Cabinet Minister, Sir Charles Hawker, who was tragically killed in the Kyeema air crash in Mt Dandenong, Victoria in 1938. Across the political divide he was recognized as a potential Prime Minister and acclaimed for his fortitude and courage. Despite the severity of the injuries he suffered in World War 1, he energetically pursued new initiatives in agricultural production and in the international marketing of rural products. His leadership on defence preparation is unchallenged. The Australian Dictionary of Biographies Volume 9 (MUP) 1983 attests to his effectiveness as a Cabinet Minister and to his integrity and independence which won him extraordinary respect. Such was his reputation that the name Wakefield is synonymous with the Hawker achievements. The abolition of the electorate of Hawker in South Australia, in 1993, regrettably meant that some of the recognition due to Sir Charles has been unintentionally lost.

The other Parliamentarian whose contribution to Australian society is most prominently identified with the electorate of Wakefield in recent times, is the former Minister for the Navy, Hon. Bert Kelly, who represented Wakefield from 1958 to 1977. Mirroring the example set by Sir Charles Hawker, Bert was a passionate advocate for rural Australia and an effective communicator. He is widely accredited with single handedly pursuing the cause of tariff reform when such proposals were fundamentally unpopular. In his quietly eccentric way, Bert Kelly persisted until the need for tariff reform became recognized by both Government and Opposition parties. Former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam not only lauded his courageous stand but travelled to Adelaide to attend his funeral and pay him a tribute. No one is suggesting the electorate should be named "Kelly" – that would have some unfortunate connotations – but the removal of the name "Wakefield" has the unintended consequence of diminishing his substantial contribution to our national prosperity.

"Wakefield" is a Federation seat with a Federation name. One might safely presume that at Federation it was widely recognized that the substantial contribution Edward Gibbon Wakefield had made to colonization and to land tenure needed to be celebrated. His impact on the subdivision of land and on the creation of a land title system that would make it possible for settlers to independently acquire and develop an asset, has been fundamental in our emergence as an egalitarian society. As an author and as a Parliamentarian, Wakefield sought to cultivate colonial societies which would attract capital, encourage emigration and assure prosperity. He created a concept of land ownership which became the basis for South Australia's development as a "free" society and was subsequently widely adopted. This was seen as a remarkable achievement at Federation and remains so to this day.

Your reconsideration of the decision to rename the electorate of Wakefield would be appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Neil Andrew

Hon JN Andrew AO