



# Comment on suggestion 39

David Whittaker

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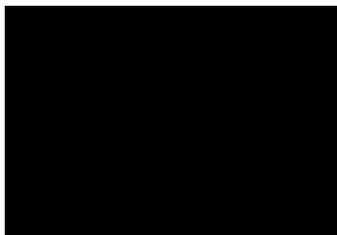
Australian Electoral Commission

RE: New Federal Victorian Electorate

I write in support of the the English-Speaking Union (ESU) submission in regard to the proposed new federal electorate in Victoria following the 2021 redistribution. The ESU's submission proposes the name of the new electorate to be WATT, in recognition of the outstanding service to the state and the country by the late William Alexander Watt (1871-1946).

I make the below comments in support of this submission in the belief that Watt fulfils all the criteria for naming of Federal Electoral Divisions.

1. Initially elected to the Legislative Assembly for Melbourne North in October 1897 and served with distinction for many years in both the Victorian and Federal parliaments.
2. Became the youngest cabinet minister in the British Empire at the age of 28.
3. In this capacity of Premier of Victoria, he introduced workers compensation legislation, state support for hospitals, electrification of railways and an extensive State-wide irrigation system.
4. Was a staunch supporter and lead the reform of the Victorian Legislative Council, the female franchise, further factory legislation and protection of the weak.
5. A prominent advocate of Australian Federation which led to the establishment of the Commonwealth of Australia.
6. Held the Victorian seat of Balaclava in the House of Representatives for 11 years (1914-1929).
7. Was the Treasurer of Australia in March 1918, was Acting Prime Minister until August 1918 and was the Speaker from 1923 to 1925.
8. Internationally renowned as a civil rights campaigner.
9. Appointed in 1921 as a Privy Counsellor and Commander of the Légion d'Honneur of France in 1924.
10. Was devoted to helping the oppressed and was committed to fairness, equality and justice.
11. A revered leader whose contribution has been recognised in the [Australian Dictionary of Biography](#)
12. Provided critical support and leadership to the formation of the English-Speaking Union (Victorian Branch), which was founded after the World War I to advance international peace and understanding between the English-Speaking peoples. He held the role of Branch President of the ESU from 1921 to 1925.



David Whittaker.