



# Objection 48

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5 pages

## Objection to proposed redistribution

Whilst I am not in full agreement with the electoral boundaries proposed by the redistribution committee for Victoria I commend them for the work they have done.

I firstly turn to the matter of Division names and then go on to identify issues I have with the boundaries as proposed

### Division Names

In terms of Division names I wish to object to the retention of **Maribyrnong** as the name for that division. I was late in submitting a response to stage 3 of the redistribution process where I proposed raising this matter. My objection arises as there is currently a suburb of Maribyrnong, the Maribyrnong City Council and the electoral Division of Maribyrnong. I contend that this creates an element of confusion which is best resolved by renaming the Division. Having worked for the AEC in the area I have personal experience of this confusion which I contend led to unnecessary frustration for electors. Furthermore under the proposed boundaries the suburb and much of the council are NOT contained in the Division and thus a point of differentiation would be appropriate. It is advised that the Division is so named as the Maribyrnong River forms its western boundary, I do wonder if this is a sound rationale for the retention of the name. I note that the Division was created in 1906 and certainly over its life (and most probably in 1906) the river ran through the and thus was a notable geographic formation however that is no longer the case. Personally I feel that **Hawke** would be a good name for the Division and is better suited to this location than that currently proposed. Failing that as the division falls within the Wurundjeri lands I contend that **Wurundjeri** would be an appropriate name or alternatively **Barak** in honour of William Barak a prominent early aboriginal in the Wurundjeri area.

In suggesting the naming of the Division of **Maribyrnong** as **Hawke** rather than that currently proposed I do so as electoral history in the area of the proposed Division of **Hawke** has seen Divisions come and go over the years particularly as evidenced by the former Division of **Burke**. I contend that Divisions named after former Prime Ministers should reasonably expect to exist into perpetuity however currently I have no confidence this will occur with the proposed Division. The Division of **Maribyrnong** has far greater certainty of a continuing existence. If this is accepted then I propose that the new Division take the name **Burke**. I note some others mentioned this in their submissions to the redistribution and I made a similar suggestion to the 2018 redistribution committee where I suggested the creation of a division somewhat similar to that proposed as **Hawke** in this redistribution.

### Electoral Divisions

As a generalisation it appears that in redrawing the boundaries in several instances insufficient consideration was given to the community of interest criteria. This was particularly evidenced to me in the Divisions of **Deakin**, **Chisholm** and **Menzies** where Whitehorse Rd / Maroondah Highway has been suggested as the boundary. This has split communities such as Box Hill, Mitcham and Nunawading between Divisions. Similarly Berwick has been split particularly between **Bruce** and **LaTrobe**. I contend that these are communities which should not be split.

I also note that in redrawing the boundaries broadly there is now minimal differences in the electors assigned to each Division. Whilst this is commendable I do think there needs to be

more focus on the maximum and minimum numbers of elector numbers. As an example SLA1's 2135202 and 2135225 which constitute around 740 electors have been included in **Gellibrand** when they probably would have been better placed in the Division of **Fraser**. That number of electors does NOT result in either division exceeding its parameters. Yes the number of electors per Division are more closely aligned however that does not appear to be a prime criteria in establishing the boundaries.

In making this objection I have not gone to the level of detail as per my initial submission but rather provide a broad idea for your consideration.

### **Gellibrand / Lalor**

In my previous submission I suggested that much of the Truganina SLA2 be moved from the Division of **Lalor** to **Gellibrand** (and I note this was in a number of other submissions) and I note that the redistribution committee have largely acted in this manner. I have since had the opportunity to visit the Truganina area and I contend that as this area sits west of the large Laverton North industrial area and with the excision of the Williams Landing suburb from the Division of **Gellibrand** Truganina is essentially isolated from the rest of the Division. Additionally Truganina is primarily new housing stock (as evidenced by the 30% population growth between the 2019 and 2025 figures) which is different from much of the remainder of the Division of Gellibrand (10% growth).

I now contend that those parts of the Truganina SLA 2 the redistribution committee has recommended for inclusion in the Division of **Gellibrand** are actually included in the Division of **Lalor**. With this change, along with the changes already proposed by the redistribution committee in the Williams Landing area all of the Truganina SLA2 will fall in the Division of **Lalor**. This in particular unites Truganina with the adjacent areas of Tarneit and Wyndham Vale with both having very similar characteristics to Truganina

I object to the fact that the part of the Point Cook suburb located in SLA1 2136814 has not been included in the Division of **Gellibrand**. That area has almost ALL its association in the Point Cook direction and thus with the Division of **Gellibrand**. It is effectively cut off from the Division of **Lalor** by the Princess Freeway and the significant volume of vacant land west of the Freeway. This area has far greater association with the Division of **Gellibrand** than Truganina and if it became necessary to preference between the inclusion of these areas in the Division of **Gellibrand** this certainly has the stronger association. I acknowledge that the current state electoral boundary does not unify this area with the remainder of Point Cook however I would be most surprised if this is the case following the redistribution of the state boundaries currently occurring. Whilst the redistribution committee can consider state boundaries when determining federal boundaries I would suggest in this instance this is not pertinent on account of the population growth in that area since the state boundary was last drawn.

Given the move of Truganina to the Division of **Lalor** I would suggest that in addition to SLA1 2136814 commented on above the remainder of the Werribee South SLA2 is moved from **Lalor** to **Gellibrand**. Whilst this would see the Werribee CBD placed in **Gellibrand** I do not sense that is an issue as the trade off is that the newly developing areas such as Truganina, Tarneit and Wyndham Vale are included in the Division of **Lalor**. The Northern boundary of the Werribee South SLA2 in the railway line thus this forms a strong boundary. I see no reason why the agricultural land in the Werribee South SLA2 is better placed in the Division of **Lalor**

than the Division of **Gellibrand**. Yes the Division of **Lalor** does have small pockets of agricultural land in the outlying areas of the Division however that is of a pastoral nature whereas that in Werribee South is vegetable growing thus I sense there is little commonality of interest between these areas.

### **Gellibrand / Fraser**

I object to the electors in SLA1's 2135202 and 2135225 (which are part of the Yarraville SLA2) and which constitute around 740 electors having been included in the Division of **Gellibrand**. I would suggest these electors are better related to those in the SLA2 which have been included in the Division of **Fraser** than those of necessity included in the Division of **Gellibrand**. Numerically the Division of **Fraser** is well capable of accepting this number of electors and staying within requirements. The rationale for this is that as one moves in a Southerly direction the Westgate Freeway is quite a boundary and thus the Yarraville electors are effectively distant from those in the Division of **Gellibrand**. Also Williamstown Rd and Westgate Freeway as boundaries is more easily understood and explained than the proposed boundaries.

### **Indi / Nicholls**

I would contend that the 660 electors in the Euroa SLA2 (SLA1 2105513 and 2105514A) which are included in the Division of **Nicholls** are united with the remainder of the electors in that SLA whom are located in the Division of **Indi**. This boundary may have been necessary for reasons of balance in the 2018 redistribution but the move still leaves both divisions within acceptable bounds. I have not been able to identify any other boundaries on ABS maps which would suggest the move not occur.

### **LaTrobe / Bruce / Casey/ Holt**

As mentioned in my introduction I have issues with the boundary between the Divisions of **Bruce** and **LaTrobe** being drawn in the heart of the Berwick township and I believe it needs to be reviewed. It would seem logical to move the boundary South so that it runs along the Princess Freeway to the boundary between the Casey and Cardinia LGA's. This would add 3000 electors to the Division of **Bruce** with a subsequent reduction in the Division of **LaTrobe**. Although the Division of **LaTrobe** would still meet the 2025 requirements it falls below the 2019 requirements. In part the 2019 deficit could be covered by returning the 1000 electors which have been relocated to the Division of **Casey**. I would suggest that there are options to then make some rearrangement of the proposed boundaries still in the Berwick area such that electors the Divisions of **Holt / Bruce** and **LaTrobe** remain within their acceptable bounds. I do note that adding 2000 electors to the Division of **Bruce** does NOT take it outside the 2019 bounds and it is only marginally outside that for 2025.

### **McEwan / Scullin / Caldwell**

The Division of **McEwan** has been an unusual Division probably since its inception and the electors contained within it have certainly encompassed a diversity of areas. This proposal

see's the Division move even further to the North West such that it extends as far as Woodend. I would contend that looked at holistically there is little in common between the Eastern and Western sides of the Division. The creation of the proposed Division of **Hawke** also creates a situation whereby if the major roads are traversed it is necessary to cross through a number of other Divisions to traverse between the Eastern and Western sides of the Division. I contend that this is inappropriate. I note that a number of submissions suggested that the Division of **McEwan** extend as far west as the Hume Highway and it would seem this may be possible particularly via a redesign of the Division of **Scullin**. In my submission I did not consider the Division of **Scullin** given that its elector numbers fell within acceptable bounds. Since the proposal has been released I have noticed how the Mernda area (suburb and SLA2) is both currently and proposed to be split between the Divisions of **Scullin** and **McEwan**. I contend that all of Mernda be unified in the Division of **McEwan**. Additionally that the South Morang (North) and South Morang (South) SLA2's are also unified in the Division of **McEwan** as is the Wollert SLA2. There seems a clear association between these areas and those further to their East already in the Division of **McEwan**. This would also result in the Division being primarily west of the Hume Highway and thus allow it to operate in a much more unified fashion.

The Division of **Scullin** would then need to extend Westward to take in the Southern parts of the Division of **Calwell**. Whilst the Merri Creek could be viewed as a barrier in the creation of the Division there are links across it and I would contend that there are similarities in the population construct and demographics which would make this quite a good fit and well worthy of consideration

The Northern part of the Division of **Calwell** would then be united with those parts of the Division of **McEwan** primarily West of the Hume Highway although there may be opportunities to explore modifications to the proposed Division of **Hawke** particularly considering the linkages along the Calder Highway corridor between the communities of Sunbury through to Woodend

Evidence suggests that historically in undertaking redistributions there has been a desire to impact as fewer electors as possible but I believe that the current redistribution presents an opportunity to be a little more radical in so far as the Division of **McEwan** and its adjoining Divisions is concerned.

### **Menzies / Deakin / Chisholm**

As mentioned in my introduction I do not believe that Whitehorse Rd / Maroondah Highway provides a good boundary between the Divisions of **Deakin / Chisholm** and **Menzies** and would strongly urge reconsideration of this as the boundary.

In so far as the Division of **Deakin** in concerned I am perplexed at the significant redrawing of the boundaries for the Division. The proposed boundaries split a number of suburbs between the Division of **Deakin** and either the Division of **Chisholm** or **Menzies** whereas that was not previously the case. It strikes me that generally suburbs have a strong community interest and that is a key criterion in establishing boundaries yet the proposed outcome appears contrary to this. I would strongly urge that apart from the inclusion of the Croydon North / Warranwood area as is proposed the existing boundaries remain. The outcome in terms of numbers of electors sits reasonably well against that of the other proposed Divisions.

If the changes to the Division of **Deakin** are as I suggest then the proposed Division of **Menzies** will have lost electors whilst the proposed Division of **Chisholm** will have gained

electors. This indicates that the proposed boundary along Whitehorse Rd can move to the South. Possibly the boundary could run along Riversdale Rd and Gardiners Creek and in doing so all of Box Hill would be contained in the Division of **Menzies** whilst all of Blackburn would be in the Division of **Chisholm**. I believe this provides a far better outcome than that proposed.

### **Conclusion**

Whilst there is no perfect solution when drawing up the electoral boundaries I commend the ideas I have put forward for your consideration. I do feel that overall they result in a better outcome and I look forward to the results you come up with.

Colin McLaren

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