



Suggestion 84

Murray Davis

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Friday 16th October 2020

Dear Australian Electoral Commission (AEC),

Re: Wannon Electorate name and boundaries

Firstly, I believe we should keep the name of the Wannon electorate as is. The name has both historical and geographical significance. However, I would like to see a few changes made to the current Wannon electoral boundaries.

Here at Dergholm, we were previously in the Shire of Glenelg which is part of the Wannon electorate; however, for several years now we have been part of the West Wimmera Shire which is in the Mallee electorate. Being shifted to another shire council and another electorate for us here in the Western District seems unfortunate. There are many differences between these two electorates. For example, the climate and rainfall are different in these two electorates and this also causes problems relating to fire restrictions. People in the Mallee electorate have different farming and rural concerns from those in the Wannon electorate. The Mallee electorate consists of cropping, fruit production, and primarily sheep grazing; however in the Wannon electorate there is more grazing (both sheep and cattle) and dairy, and much less cropping. Also, a lot of the country in the far west of the Wannon electorate is under forest plantations, such as pines and blue gums.

I understand that change is a part of life and is often progressive in nature; however, to change the boundaries so significantly and with little concern for what the voters really think and feel is not helpful to anyone. I am aware that electoral boundaries change from time to time due to population drift; however, we cannot change the climatic conditions which favour different agricultural practices, and the different community concerns of interest.

I believe the boundary between the Wannon and Mallee electorates should be moved further north. Wannon should take in the county of Follett which was the old Shire of Glenelg northern boundary, and at one time the north western boundary of the Wannon electorate. Some years ago, the Wannon electorate northern boundary was north of Edenhope. The Mallee electorate should also be moved to the east.

The headquarters of the Mallee electorate is located in Mildura, and the headquarters for the Wannon electorate is located in Hamilton. The distance of the Mallee electorate from north to south, that is from its headquarters in Mildura to the south of Dergholm is over 400km, whereas the Wannon electorate headquarters is only about 120km away in Hamilton. People from the southern part of the Mallee electorate are far more likely to do their business in Hamilton than Mildura; and it is unfortunate that the federal representative for the Mallee electorate does not often get to the southern townships in this electorate.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak about these matters. I hope you will carefully consider the information I have offered in this submission.

Yours faithfully,
Murray Davis
Dergholm