



**THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

Comment on suggestion 17

The Nationals WA

3 pages

Redistribution Committee for Western Australia
C/- Australian Electoral Commission
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CANBERRA ACT 2601

2020 Western Australian federal redistribution - comment on public suggestions

Dear Committee Members

The Nationals WA have reviewed the submitted public suggestions to the 2020 WA federal redistribution and wish to submit the following comments.

The Nationals reaffirms its focus on ensuring that the boundaries drawn in regional areas represent and are built upon the strongest possible communities of interests – local government areas – subject to the numerical criteria under which the current redistribution must be carried out.

The comments we submit relate specifically to suggestions relating to the regional divisions.

We have also sought to argue against unnecessary changes causing further disruption to voters in a year which has already experienced its share of extraordinary disruption.

The Party also reaffirms our recognition the Federal Redistribution must consider the state as a whole. Therefore our suggestions proposed for regional Western Australia allow for the remaining eleven (11) metropolitan and outer metropolitan electoral divisions to be redrawn well within the numerical and statutory criteria required under the Act.

The Nationals welcome noting that the submissions concerning themselves with the regional electorates broadly agree with the need to avoid enlarging O'Connor and Durack further, with our suggestions largely consistent with the majority.

SUGGESTION 10 Jeff Wadell

The Nationals note Jeff Wadell's comments regarding Durack that it "must gain electors and can only gain electors from either Pearce or O'Connor. I was loath to adjust the Durack – O'Connor boundary as the means of communication and travel are as good as they can get, given the remoteness of parts of both Divisions."

We note his proposed solution which generally matches our own to move the Wheatbelt shires of Gingin, Chittering, Toodyay, Northam, York and Beverley from Pearce to Durack.

We also note and generally agree with his proposal to shift the western boundary of O'Connor by relocating shires from the Divisions of Canning and Forrest.

SUGGESTION 15 David Liam Walsh

The Nationals disagree with the argument put by David Liam Walsh that O'Connor must expand, and disagree with the unnecessary movement of shires between O'Connor and Durack.

The Nationals in our suggestion included an argument that in the extreme circumstances experienced in 2020 there should be an attempt to minimise further unnecessary voter disruption by undertaking and adopting minimal change to electoral division boundaries wherever possible. The transfer of shires between these two

divisions causes unnecessary disruption as further inclusions from other divisions are still required.

SUGGESTION 17 Mark Mulcair

The Nationals strongly agree with the suggestions by Mark Mulcair regarding the Division of Durack, noting his suggested changes similarly match our own recommendations to move the Wheatbelt communities of the Shires of Gingin, Chittering, Toodyay, Northam, York, and Beverley into Durack to fit with existing Wheatbelt shires.

We agree generally with his proposed inclusions to the Division O'Connor from the current seat of Forrest, noting his suggestion that the "Division already contains south-western Shires such as Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Manjimup, and Boyup Brook, so pushing further into this area is a fairly logical extension".

SUGGESTION 20 Darren McSweeney

The Nationals strongly disagree with the proposed changes to the Division of Durack to pick-up the regions of Esperance, Kalgoorlie and the remote areas from the current Division of O'Connor, resulting in a proposal showing no consideration of clauses in Section 66(3)(b) of the Commonwealth Electoral Act:

(b) subject to paragraph (a), shall give due consideration, in relation to each proposed Electoral Division, to:

- (i) community of interests within the proposed Electoral Division, including economic, social and regional interests;*
- (ii) means of communication and travel within the proposed Electoral Division;*
- (iv) the physical features and area of the proposed Electoral Division; and*
- (v) the boundaries of existing Divisions in the State or Territory;*

The size of such a division is a major impediment to travel within the proposed Division and would represent a serious deterrent to constituents being able to access proper representation, particularly for those rural and remote communities already facing such obstacles and significant disadvantage.

The existing Division of Durack is a geographically enormous seat as it stands – it is the largest electorate in Australia and the third largest single-member electorate in the world. The Nationals reiterate the need to expand its projected enrolment with the addition of logical communities of interest with minimal increases to its area.

SUGGESTION 23 WA Labor

The Nationals generally agree with Labor's brief comments regarding the regional divisions and their proposal to avoid minimal changes to Durack and O'Connor. Their comments that "the wheatbelt areas in regional Western Australia should be united with other regional wheatbelt towns in the Division of Durack", being transferred from Pearce are noted.

However the broad assertion that parts of Hasluck should be moved to both O'Connor and Durack would seemingly ignore the community of interest factor by suggesting outer metropolitan and suburban expansion areas have a commonality with regional and rural areas.

The Nationals argue that community of interest should consider where a group of electors identify themselves as part of an existing 'community', every effort should be made to avoid dividing them between electoral divisions.

SUGGESTION 24 Liberal Party of Australia (WA)

The Nationals strongly agree with Liberals suggestions regarding changes to the division of Durack, specifically noting their comments that the additional electors required would logically be supplied from non-metropolitan section of current division

of Pearce. We also note their comment this would unite the WA Legislative Assembly district of Moore within the same division.

The Nationals generally agree with the suggested changes to the Division of O'Connor, 7excepting the unnecessary movement of the Sire of Quairading from Durack into O'Connor. This is a slight change causing unnecessary disruption.

We note the Liberals comments that the current Durack/O'Connor boundary reflects realities of communications and community of interest and should not be subject to sweeping changes.

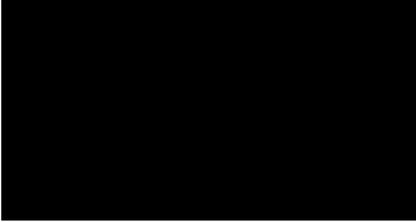
SUGGESTION 26 Dean Ashley

The Nationals generally agree with Dean Ashley's suggestions and note his argument regarding the Division of Durack that "adding the non-metropolitan LGAs from Pearce does add to the diversity of interests being represented by a single division, it is almost inevitable that those LGAs are added to a rural division in this redistribution and Durack does already represent a significant portion of the Wheatbelt."

The Nationals strongly agree with his argument put forward regarding changes to the western boundary of the Division of O'Connor to include the Nannup and Augusta-Margaret River LGAs.

I trust this is of some assistance in determining what is a very difficult redistribution fairly and with minimal disruption to voters. The Nationals WA thank the Committee and staff for the opportunity to provide comment on the public suggestions received.

Yours sincerely,



Jack Mallick
Acting State Director - Operations