



The Federal Redistribution 2006
NEW SOUTH WALES

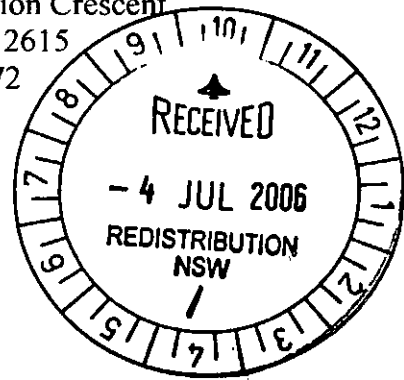


Public Objection Number: 1

Name: Mr Martin GORDON

Page(s): 4

86 Companion Crescent
Flynn ACT 2615
02-62589372



The Redistribution Committee for NSW
PO Box 20014
World Square
NSW 2002

Dear Members,

I would like to comment on the proposals of the Redistribution Committee which was released on 30 June 2006.

I appreciate that considerable effort goes into the deliberations of the Committee. I have written this paper in two segments the first portion on the basis that retaining Gwydir is considered and the second on the basis that the Committee largely retains its proposals and that I suggest adjustments that are more workable.

Retaining Gwydir

I found that the Committee had proposed some worthy ideas for the redistribution of the state. However I found that the abolition of a federation seat Gwydir to be unnecessary. The Committee identified that the growth patterns around the state meant that Sydney and inland country NSW were relatively declining, although both had areas of high growth. Whilst the coastal areas and the Central coast were experiencing substantial growth.

The numbers of electors that are shifted to accomplish the Committees proposals I consider are excessive. The Gwydir based methodology of the Committee has meant that the higher growth outside Sydney has being disregarded. Of the 22 seats outside the Sydney basin they have a combined deficiency below quota of 34,486 which will shrink to 26,759 in 2010. Whilst for the 28 Sydney seats the deficiency of 53,469 will actually grow to 66,702. Yet despite this a seat has been removed from regional NSW. It would have being easier to transfer a portion of the electorate of Macquarie (46,946 (48,210) electors from Blue Mountains Council) to Calare and achieve a transfer from a fast growing area of the Sydney basis which would lead to less disturbance in boundaries in both regions.

The Committee by abolishing Gwydir has had to make substantial changes to many electorates, such as removing the Parramatta area from Parramatta, to achieve its objectives, whereas say abolishing Reid would address enrolment shortages in neighbouring seats, with considerably less disturbance.

The abolition of Reid despite its historic importance as a former Prime Minister's name would produce a more satisfactory outcome. The proposal of the Labor Party to in fact abolish Reid reinforces the argument that retention of Reid is more difficult than its abolition for the overall redistribution.

The abolition of Reid, which has the smallest enrolment in NSW would make up numbers in surrounding electorates such as Blaxland, Watson, Fowler, Parramatta, Prospect, which have projected deficiencies of about 26,000 electors alone, with electorates such as Barton, Banks, a further 13,000 electors deficient.

North of Reid is Bennelong, and Berowra which are below quota. The overall movements are small, but easily accomplished by the abolition of Reid and modest transfers from Parramatta. Parramatta would straddle both sides of the Parramatta River if Reid were abolished. Bennelong could then take in parts of Dundas, and Mobbs Hill. The overall impact would be a more clearly defined focus of Parramatta on the Parramatta River.

Surplus enrolments in Eden-Monaro, Gilmore, Hume, Lyne, Paterson, Richmond, Newcastle, Dobell, Hunter, could have being used more creatively. The one-off movement of Blue Mountains Council would have meant fewer changes to western Sydney and to the inland electorates. Lindsay, Chifley, and Prospect have undergone unnecessary changes. The surplus from Mitchell, Greenway could have largely made up Macquarie's subsequent deficiency.

In the south and west of Sydney the deficiency of numbers in Hughes, could more easily made good by transfers from Werriwa, east of the Sydney-Campbelltown railway line in areas such as Long Point, Ingleburn, Minto Heights, Minto, Leumeah, Kentlyn. This would have directly moved areas from a high growing electorate to a neighbouring one with minimal disruption, rather than from a slower growing electorate necessitating more adjustments. The Macarthur electorate could easily lose suburbs to Werriwa (as the Committee has done) to come within quota.

Expanding Newcastle further north of the Hunter River could have being avoided, by transfers with the Hunter and Charlton electorates. As a result Paterson could remain a more coastal electorate with less disturbance. The transfers between Richmond and Page as an example may have been unnecessary as they only achieve a net transfer of about 1,000 electors.

The proposals for Eden-Monaro involve the electorate crossing the steep escarpment near the coast, and also the Great Dividing Range to incorporate communities to satisfy quota requirements. The retention of Gwydir, and transfer some electors east of the ACT in areas such as Bungendore, Sutton, Wamboin, and possibly Braidwood into either Hume or Gilmore would have made the transfers proposed unnecessary.

A discussion later in the paper focuses on the inner and eastern suburbs of Sydney which is equally relevant in models where Gwydir or Reid is abolished.

Abolishing Gwydir

A consequence of abolishing Gwydir is as I have pointed out a large consequential movement of electors in many electorates. I have referred to adjustments above in Hughes and Werriwa (and consequently) Macarthur, an arrangement that I consider is less disruptive and involves areas of more similar socio-economic characteristics than the Committee's proposed transfer from Fowler.

Summarily adjustments between Paterson, Newcastle, and Hunter, would enable Paterson to remain a more coastal electorate, with more socio economically similar areas in Hunter and Charlton electorates being exchanged with Newcastle.

In Sydney the western semi-rural portions of Fowler could be transferred to Lindsay, and require less disruption with Chifley and Prospect.

Even with the abolition of Gwydir, the impact on Parramatta due to the retention of Reid is significant; with the loss of the core CBD areas of Parramatta that electorate has lost its focus. Parramatta has fundamentally changed in character to accommodate the retention of Reid.

The proposals for Eden-Monaro involve the electorate crossing the steep escarpment near the coast, and also the Great Dividing Range to incorporate communities to satisfy quota requirements is not ideal. The Great Dividing Range is a substantial natural boundary which is surprisingly not used as an electoral boundary on this occasion.

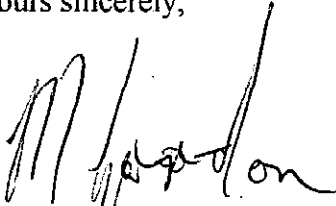
The inner and eastern suburbs of Sydney have been modestly changed. With small transfers from Sydney and Lowe to Wentworth and Grayndler respectively. The use of South Dowling Street as a boundary has some attraction, but the use of Alison Road as a boundary with Kingsford-Smith and Wentworth, would involve transfers in one direction only. As well the transfer of industrial areas from Sydney in Zetland, Rosebery, Beaconsfield would incorporate these industrial areas within one electorate, namely Kingsford-Smith. This would mean that Sydney would be a CBD and immediate surrounds electorate focused on Sydney Harbour, including Kings Cross and Darlinghurst. Wentworth would remain an eastern suburbs electorate and Kingsford-Smith more industrial and focused on Botany Bay.

Conclusion

I appreciate that considerable effort goes into the deliberations of the Committee but the outcome of the abolition of Gwydir, is not in my view the best solution to this redistribution. In previous distributions the abolition of Dundas for example, occurred and its absorption into neighbouring electorates was accomplished without undue odium. The abolition of Reid despite its historic importance as a former Prime Minister's name would produce a more satisfactory outcome. The proposal of the Labor Party to in fact abolish Reid reinforces the argument that retention of Reid is more difficult than its abolition for the overall redistribution.

I would suggest that retention of Gwydir and abolition of Reid would offer a more satisfactory overall redistribution for NSW.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martin Gordon'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and a long, sweeping underline.

Martin Gordon
2 July 2006