



The Federal Redistribution 2006
NEW SOUTH WALES



Public Objection Number: 1683

Name: The Hon John ANDERSON MP

Page(s): 6



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 28/07/2006 02:52 PM

To <nsw.redistribution@aec.gov.au>

cc

bcc

Subject Objection to NSW Federal Electorate Redistribution Proposal

Classification Unclassified

Dear Commissioners

Please find attached my submission to the Redistribution Committee for New South Wales.

Trusting the Committee will carefully consider my submission.

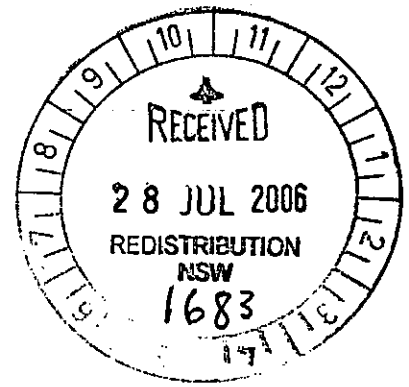
<<280706 Submission to AEC re redistribution.pdf>>

Yours sincerely

John Anderson MP



Federal Member for Gwydir 280706 Submission to AEC re redistribution.pdf



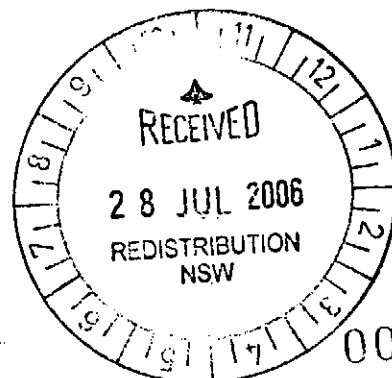
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Hon John Anderson
Member for Gwydir

28 July 2006

Redistribution Committee for New South Wales
Australian Electoral Commission
PO Box 20014
WORLD SQUARE NSW 2002



Dear Commissioners

I seek to object to the proposed boundaries released by the AEC's NSW Redistribution Committee on the 30th of June.

As the representative of over 80,000 electors in north-western NSW, I am appalled that the Committee has recommended the abolition of the seat of Gwydir.

With four seats well under quota in the south and west of Sydney, the boundaries proposed by the National and Liberal Parties provide a logical arrangement that takes into account electorate size, demographic change and communities of interest.

There is simply no need to abolish a country seat in this redistribution.

The abolition of Blaxland, as recommended by the Coalition parties, enables the reduction of one seat in NSW without creating a massive, disparate constituency that is extremely difficult to service.

The seat of Parkes, as proposed by the AEC's NSW Redistribution Committee will be the largest Federal seat in the history of Federal representation in the state of New South Wales.

As a Member of Parliament representing a large country seat, I passionately believe that all communities, however small, deserve equitable access to the Federal Parliamentary Representative.

Only three seats in the current Federal Parliament are traditionally rural in their composition, without major urban components. They are the seats of O'Connor in Western Australia, Maranoa in Queensland and Gwydir in New South Wales. All three seats lack a major and dominant population centre and are comprised of a large number of medium and small sized country towns and communities.

Providing equitable representation in Gwydir is extremely challenging, but possible. A mayor of a medium-sized town in my electorate commented to me recently that I have visited his community, on average, four times a year. This is indicative of the serviceability of a seat like Gwydir. While it is challenging, the residents of this electorate do have access to their Federal Representative. If the size of the electorate were to double, it is logical to assume that such a town would see their Federal Representative only twice a year. If their Federal Representative becomes a Cabinet Minister, the number of visits could be reduced further.

02 6742 1840

In a city electorate, providing equitable access is relatively easy, due to the small distances between the MP's office and the constituents they represent.

Providing such representation in seats the size of the proposed Parkes will be impossible.

It is true that there are precedents for seats of this size. But massive seats in Western Australia (Kalgoorlie), South Australia (Grey), the Northern Territory (Lingiari) and Queensland (Kennedy and Maranoa) are unavoidable given the size of the states relative to their population base.

New South Wales is much smaller than these states and territories and remains Australia's most populous State. It is therefore tenable to configure 49 House of Representative seats that are manageable in size without resorting to an arrangement of boundaries that seriously disenfranchises so many communities in country NSW.

Gwydir is a Federation seat, an increasingly rare link to our nation's first Federally constituted Parliament. Gwydir currently comprises a diverse group of communities who make an enormous contribution to the economic and social well being of our great nation.

I implore the AEC's NSW Redistribution Committee to revisit the original submission made by The Nationals in relation to country boundary arrangements.

However, if it is the view of the Redistribution Committee that it is necessary to abolish one seat west of the Great Dividing Range, there are alternatives to what is currently being proposed.

The boundaries of Gwydir have undergone dramatic change over recent decades.

As previously stated, Gwydir lacks a major population centre around which it can be anchored. I do not believe that this is an unresolvable problem. However, if it is the desire of the Redistribution Commission to place at least one major centre in each country seat, it is worth noting that previous boundary arrangements for the seat of Gwydir have used Dubbo as a major media and service centre for the communities to its north.

I believe that such a boundary arrangement could be revisited.

While maintaining the proposed boundary between Farrer and Parkes, it is possible to transfer Orange and the surrounding communities of Cabonne, Cowra and Blayney into Parkes, while transferring Dubbo and Narromine into Gwydir.

This would return the city of Dubbo to Gwydir and provide this important Federation seat with a more structured and permanent base.

02 6742 1840

Under such boundary arrangements, it is likely it would be necessary to excise the southern portions of the Wellington and Mid Western Regional Councils for inclusion in Parkes, along with the northern portion of the Bathurst Regional Council, which is being split under the current proposal from the Commissioners.

Such a boundary could follow Lake Burrendong, the Meroo River and Lake Windamere.

Under such arrangements, Parkes would be centred on Orange in its south east, wedging out to include much of north-western NSW. Orange acts as a service and media centre for many of the Shires that could be included in the re-arranged Parkes, notably Weddin, Parkes, Forbes, Lachlan and Cowra. It is from this region that the Federal seat's enrolment growth shall occur.

Such a proposal would ensure that the diverse nature of north-western NSW was adequately reflected, with the Shires of Gwydir, Moree Plains, Walgett, Narrabri, Coonamble, Gunnedah, Warrumbungle, Narromine, Dubbo, Wellington (part) and Mid Western Regional (part) united in the Federal seat of Gwydir.

To demonstrate how such arrangements could meet the criteria of this redistribution, I include the following tables.

Gwydir How constituted	Actual Enrolment 2.12.2005	Projected Enrolment 31.05.2010
<i>SLA's from existing division of Gwydir</i>		
Gwydir (A) – Yallaroi	2 158	2 118
Moree Plains (A)	8 400	8 617
Narrabri (A)	8 915	8 985
Walgett (A)	4 018	3 902
Gunnedah (A)	8 070	8 115
Warrumbungle (A)	7 046	7 073
Coonamble (A)	2 805	2 837
Gilgandra (A)	3 076	3 081
Wellington (A) (part)	4 258	4 351
Mid Western Regional (A) – Pt A	11 968	12 553
Total from Existing Division of Gwydir	60 714	61 632
<i>SLA's from existing division of Parkes</i>		
Dubbo (C) – Pt A	21 965	23 773
Dubbo (C) – Pt B	2 411	2 431
Narromine (A)	4 531	4 637
Total from Existing Division of Parkes	28 907	30 841
Total for proposed division of Gwydir	89 621	92 473

02 6742 1840

Parkes How constituted	Actual Enrolment 2.12.2005	Projected Enrolment 31.05.2010
<i>SLA's from existing division of Gwydir</i>		
Bourke (A)	1 919	1 997
Brewarrina (A)	1 009	1 050
Warren (A) (part)	503	499
Total from Existing Division of Gwydir	3 431	3 546
<i>SLA's from existing division of Parkes</i>		
Warren (A) (part)	1 567	1 575
Bogan (A)	1 946	1 976
Central Darling (A) (part)	1 234	1 258
Cobar (A)	3 007	3 022
Unincorporated Far West (part)	387	379
Lachlan (A)	4 729	4 735
Forbes (A)	6 543	6 712
Parkes (A)	9 881	10 123
Weddin (A)	2 744	2 844
Total from Existing division of Parkes	32 038	32 624
<i>SLA's from existing division of Calare</i>		
Cabonne (A) – Pt A	1 798	1 976
Cabonne (A) – Pt B	652	707
Cabonne (A) – Pt C	6 418	6 668
Cowra (A)	8 951	9 492
Orange (C)	24 047	25 707
Blayney (A) – Pt A	3 305	3 589
Blayncy (A) – Pt B	1 270	1 304
Bathurst Regional (A) – Pt A (part)	188	189
Bathurst Regional (A) – Pt B North (part)	1 167	1 195
Mid Western Regional (A) – Pt B	2 538	2 539
Wellington (A) (part)	1 365	1 335
Total from Existing Division of Calare	51 699	54 701
Total for proposed division of Parkes	87 168	90 871

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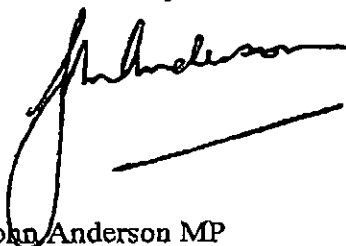
Again, I re-state my position that it is unnecessary to pursue such a course of action.

As demonstrated in the proposals from the National and Liberal Parties, it is possible to reduce the total number of Federal seats in NSW from 50 to 49 without abolishing a country seat.

I strongly believe that it is preferable to abolish a metropolitan seat, in the interests of maintaining equity in access between country and city voters. The notion of 'one vote, one value' becomes absurd when a voter in NSW resides in a seat 8,550 times greater than the seat of Sydney.

I trust the AEC's NSW Redistribution Committee will carefully consider ways of reducing the size of non-metropolitan seats as part of this important process.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Anderson', written over a horizontal line.

John Anderson MP
Federal Member for Gwydir