



The Federal Redistribution 2006
NEW SOUTH WALES



Public Objection Number: 1723

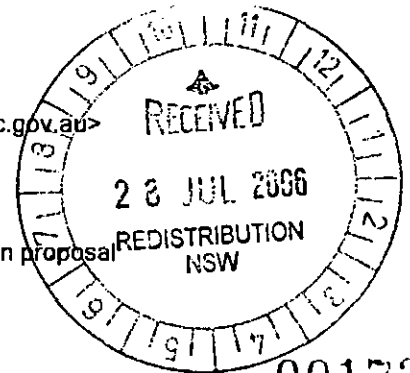
Name: Mr Nick CASMIRRI

Page(s): 2



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 28/07/2006 01:50 PM

To <nsw.redistribution@aec.gov.au>
 cc
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 Subject Objection to redistribution proposal
 Classification Unclassified



001725

Redistribution Committee for New South Wales

Dear Committee Members

I wish to object to the Committee's proposals for the redistribution of Federal Electoral Districts in New South Wales. Specifically I object to the abolition of a Division in regional New South Wales.

As a resident of regional New South Wales who is involved in lobbying governments I am acutely aware of the phenomenon of the city-country divide, something which seems more apparent in New South Wales than in some other states. I strongly object to any proposal that may have the actual or apparent effect of reducing the level of representation for regional New South Wales. Such a circumstance would result in there being less regional voices able to raise issues and concerns which are often vastly different from those of the Sydney metropolitan area.

The abolition of a regional division will also have the effect of adding to the general feelings of disempowerment that are being felt by residents of regional NSW. It will have the appearance of being another step in the continuing trend towards centralisation, something which is unpopular in most regional communities.

On the other hand, I don't believe that a credible case could be advanced that the abolition of a metropolitan Division in order to achieve the required reduction from 50 to 49 Divisions would result in a noticeable diminishing of the influence of metropolitan voices.

I will draw the Committee's attention to two anomalous, and in my view, undesirable, specific outcomes from the proposed boundaries:

1. Albury and Broken Hill will be in the same Division – This appears to be a highly bizarre outcome, and to put it bluntly, seems laughable. There would seem to be little commonality of interest between these two cities.

2. The splitting of Bathurst and Orange into separate Divisions – These two centres are widely viewed as having substantial commonalities of interest. It would seem highly desirable that every effort be made to keep them in the same Division.

I would like to support the detailed proposals lodged by Mr Peter Andren MP during the Public Suggestions process. I strongly urge the Committee to consider using these proposals as the basis for determining the final boundaries.

However, I do commend the Committee on their proposals for the Divisions of Richmond and Page. Having the Alstonville Plateau in Richmond, whilst the major regional centres of Lismore and Ballina on either side of it were in Page was a confusing and unsatisfactory situation. The Committee's proposals are a commonsense solution, and also result in the great bulk of the region's alternative lifestyle communities now being in the one Division (Richmond), which I believe is also a sensible outcome. Whilst there is a noticeable electoral impact, I believe that continuing demographic shifts will outweigh this effect in the medium-term.

I do note however that the information provided on the AEC's website does not accurately define the proposed boundary between Richmond and Page. I recommend that a written description of where the boundaries lie be placed on the website. In particular, there is no indication as to exactly where the boundary lies in the south-western corner of the Division, between the Kyogle LGA boundary and the outskirts of the Lismore urban area.

I also draw the Committee's attention to the irrelevance that the name 'Richmond' now has to the Division of that name. I appreciate that the Committee will want to retain that name as it is an original Federation Division, however the name is derived from the Richmond River, which nowadays is not within the Division's boundaries.

The name Richmond is today little-recognised as being relevant to the area covered by the Division of that name, especially amongst the growing population in the Tweed area. I suggest that the Committee may wish to consider the possibility of renaming the Division of Richmond.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my submission, and thank you for your efforts to resolve what are obviously very complex and contentious matters.

Yours Sincerely

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