



The Federal Redistribution 2006
NEW SOUTH WALES



Public Objection Number: 1841

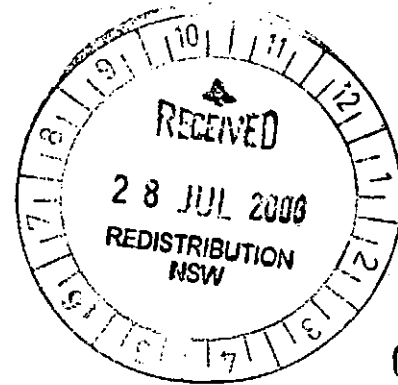
Name: NSW Farmers Federation

Page(s): 9

This Objection consisted of 2 pages of text and 7 pages containing 140 signatures. Only the text pages have been reproduced here. The 7 pages containing the signatures may be viewed at the office of the Redistribution Secretariat, Level 4, Roden Cutler House, 24 -28 Campbell Street, Sydney.

28 July 2006

Mr Ian Campbell
Australian Electoral Commissioner
Redistribution Committee for New South Wales
PO Box 20014
World Square NSW 2002



001841

Dear Commissioner

RE: The 2006 Proposed Redistribution of New South Wales into 49 Electoral Divisions

The NSW Farmers' Association (the 'Association') is Australia's largest State farmer organisation representing the interests of its farmer members – ranging from broad acre, meat, wool and grain producers, to more specialised producers in the dairy, horticulture, egg, pork, oyster and goat industries. The Association is an apolitical voluntary industry body representing the majority of commercial farm operations throughout the farming community in NSW. Through its commercial, policy and lobbying activities the Association provides a powerful and positive link between farmers and the general public.

The Association supports the retention of the Federal seat of Gwydir because we believe that the abolition of the seat will have an adverse impact on rural communities due to their ability to be adequately represented in the Federal Parliament.

The Association is concerned that the proposed changes to the Gwydir and Parkes electorates does not fully consider 'community of interest' in the proposed changes by strictly adhering to the numerical criteria.

Page 17, paragraph 65 of the report titled "*The 2006 Proposed Redistribution of New South Wales into 49 Electoral Divisions*", states that, "*the committee sought to keep electors in their existing divisions wherever it could be equitably achieved*", yet the report then states on page 26 that, "*the reconfiguration of Gwydir and Parkes resulted in approximately 82,500 electors needing to be transferred to other divisions*". In this instance the proposal fails to meet the committee's own guideline to keep electors within their existing divisions by merging the entire division of Gwydir into Parkes.

This is an inequitable situation whereby the committee admits that 82,500 electors in the newly combined electorate of Parkes have then ended up having to be redistributed into surrounding divisions in order to balance the numbers. The abolition of a city seat would have caused less disruption to the overall electorate than the abolition of Gwydir as proposed in the 2006 Redistribution of New South Wales.

In considering electorate size, the new electorate of Parkes will be approximately 376,206 square kilometres in size, or 47 percent of the total of NSW. This change will reduce the voice of NSW rural voters in the Federal Parliament. City people are

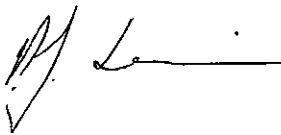
often less than 10 minutes drive from the office of their local Federal MP yet the citizens of Parkes will now be many hours drive from their 'local' MP. This will have an adverse effect on country specific issues being dealt with by the Federal Parliament.

The proposal unnecessarily creates a huge electorate in rural NSW with the unrealistic expectation that a local MP can properly serve the constituents within this electorate. The proposal also reduces regional representation in NSW by reducing the number of non-metropolitan seats to 14, therefore providing city electors with a greater opportunity to influence the legislative process in the Federal Parliament.

This proposal has the effect of reducing the voice of NSW regional citizens in the Federal Parliament. Accordingly the Association calls on the Redistribution Committee to reconsider their recommendation to dissolve the seat of Gwydir in favour of a more equitable outcome between the city and the rural areas of NSW.

Please find enclosed seven petition forms signed by 140 citizens in support of our submission.

Yours sincerely

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

Jock Laurie
President