



The Federal Redistribution 2006  
NEW SOUTH WALES

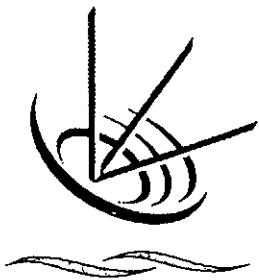


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**Public Objection Number: 1933**

**Name: PARKES SHIRE COUNCIL**

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# PARKES SHIRE COUNCIL

*Progress, opportunities and a quality lifestyle for our residents*

LF:DLE

Contact Person: Les Finn

26 July 2006

001935

The Australian Electoral Commissioner/Chair  
Redistribution Committee for New South Wales  
PO Box 20014  
WORLD SQUARE NSW 2002



Dear Commissioner,

## **OJBECTION TO PROPOSED REDISTRIBUTION OF NSW FEDERAL ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES**

At its meeting held on 4 July 2006, Council considered the Australian Electoral Commission's Media Release dated 30 June 2006 concerning the redrawing of the State's electoral boundaries into 49 federal divisions. Council also considered public comment from ratepayers and residents of the Shire and the wider Central Western region in relation to the proposed boundary changes. It was resolved to object to the redistribution in the strongest possible terms.

The following points are made in support of Council's firm opposition to the proposal to reduce the current 50 federal seats in NSW to 49.

### **EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION**

The redistribution in the number of seats in the Central and Western regions of the State increases the area of the remnant electorate(s) and reduces the ability of the elected federal member to service such a large area. The proposal to remove the seat of Gwydir and largely absorb it into a greater electorate of Parkes (estimated to geographically occupy 48% of the State) diminishes a Member of Parliament's ability to deliver effective, balanced and equitable representation on behalf of the communities within the redrawn electorate.

The redistribution process which is based upon population projections for the State, by its very nature, works against effective representation in rural areas. It supports a hypothesis that areas that have declining populations are in some way entitled to less effective representation. It will be difficult (if not impossible) for any representative to adequately attend to the needs of the electorate or to ensure democratic representation for the constituents.

The current members for Gwydir and Parkes have difficulty in maintaining a frequency of visitation with constituents simply because of the tyranny of distance and the demands placed on members of Parliament today, particularly if they have Portfolio obligations.

Council is very much opposed to the alteration of the current boundaries because of diminished representation for rural and regional communities.

### **COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST**

The Shire of Parkes is currently situated most appropriately in the federal electorate of Parkes. Whilst acknowledging that this has a promotional as well as a historic basis (both named after the Father of Federation, Sir Henry Parkes) it gives rise to the consideration of Communities of Interest. The proposal will move the Shires of Parkes, Forbes and Weddin into the Calare Electorate, effectively polarising communities in the process. These local government areas do not share geographic and climatic similarities with those of the Calare area. Comparisons of their major commodity production outputs and employment profiles also highlight the differences.

Other stark examples exist in the proposed redrawn electorate of Farrer where Broken Hill and Albury are expected to share a Community of Interest despite being separated by a distance of nearly 700 kilometres (straight line). In Calare, Bathurst and Orange share a strong Community of Interest and it is now proposed to split the two. Council objects to the redrawing of boundaries which are predicated on equality of numbers across electorates rather than established Communities of Interest.

Council suggests that more scrutiny be carried out concerning the Community of Interest criteria when the Committee examines the adjustment of electorate boundaries.

In conclusion, Council asks that your Committee revisits the proposed boundary changes and that in doing so a greater emphasis is placed on the requirement for effective representation and Communities of Interest.

Thank you for considering Council's objections to the proposed changes.

Yours faithfully



Alan McCormack  
**GENERAL MANAGER**