



The Federal Redistribution 2006  
NEW SOUTH WALES



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**Public Objection Number: 196**

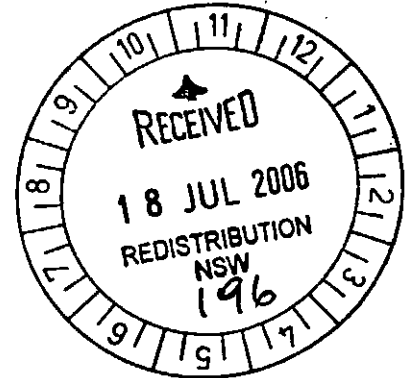
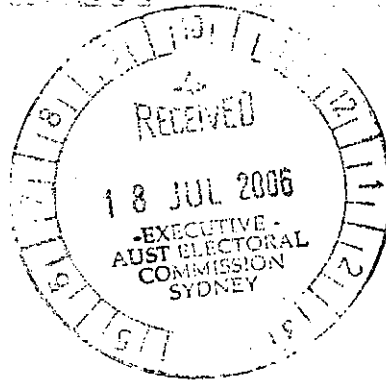
**Name: Mr and Mrs B and M SEMMLER**

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# Brian E and Mary J Semmler

PO Box 282  
DUBBO NSW 2830

Phone/Fax: 02 6882 3486  
Mobile: 0439 82 3486



14 July 2006

Mr David Farrell  
Australian Electoral Officer for NSW  
Level 1, Roden Cutler House  
24 Campbell Street  
HAYMARKET NSW 2000

Dear Mr Farrell,

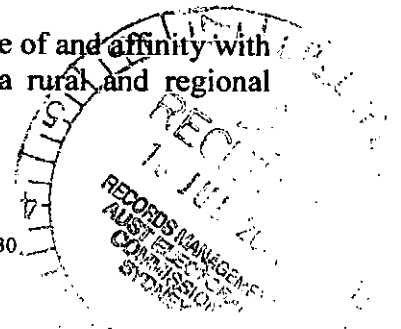
## Re: Proposed Redistribution of Federal Electoral Boundaries in NSW

The following is my submission/objection to the Proposed Redistribution of Federal Electoral Boundaries in NSW in regard to country electorates in general, and in regard to the proposed Division of Parkes in particular.

I make this submission based on the following

- I have lived in country New South Wales almost all my life,
- in Wagga Wagga from birth until aged twenty four (24),
- in Coffs Harbour, Gulgong, Grenfell and Cootamundra for shorter periods, and
- in the City of Dubbo since 1970.
- my career has been in Health Management, being the Chief Executive Officer of various Public Hospitals, including eighteen (18) years as CEO of Dubbo Base Hospital & Health Service. I was responsible for the introduction of Regional Engineering, Linen, Pathology, Pharmacy and other Services for centres throughout the Orana Region.
- While continuing to reside in Dubbo, I also held the position of Executive Director of the Private Hospitals Association of NSW Inc, and commuted to Sydney to fulfil that role.
- I was an Alderman of Dubbo City Council for 5½ years, Chairman of Committees in that time, and Deputy Mayor for 3 years.
- Other positions included being the Treasurer, Vice-Chairman, or Chairman of the Dubbo Rehabilitation & Social Welfare Committee for a continuous period of 17 years, and the Secretary/Treasurer of the Orana Region Rehabilitation & Social Welfare Committee for 8 years.
- I've been a Rotarian for Over 40 years, and I'm a Past Governor of Rotary District 9670.

This information is provided for the sole purpose of establishing a knowledge of and affinity with country areas, and of an intimate involvement in community affairs in a rural and regional setting.



The involvement and experience outlined has taught me there is a vast difference between City and Country aspirations, needs, geography, services, and opportunities; and there are very few people, particularly in Government and major Industry, who have an appreciation and understanding of both.

While I appreciate the Redistribution Committee's task is "to ensure that, as far as practicable, there are the same number of electors in each division within a State or Territory", to base divisions predominantly on the basis of population, in this situation of vast rural areas, is ridiculous. In terms of equity, justice, and fairness, this is an impossible task; and a formula which establishes an index that takes into account population and distance, and "community of interests, communication and transport links, and natural features" must be developed before electors and Parliamentary representatives in rural and regional areas are further disadvantaged.

In the case of the proposed Division of Parkes, and to a lesser extent, Farrer, there is absolutely no "community of interest, communication and transport links, and natural features". How could one possibly see a "community of interest, communication and transport links" between towns on the western side of the proposed New England electorate (Moree, Narrabri, Gunnedah, etc) with Dubbo, Forbes, Cobar, Bourke, etc. The natural alliance of the northern towns mentioned is clearly with Tamworth and Armidale.

It is almost impossible to relate such criteria to the present electorates of Parkes and Gwydir; and absolutely impossible to argue these characteristics apply, even in the slightest way, to the proposed vast geographical electorate of Parkes.

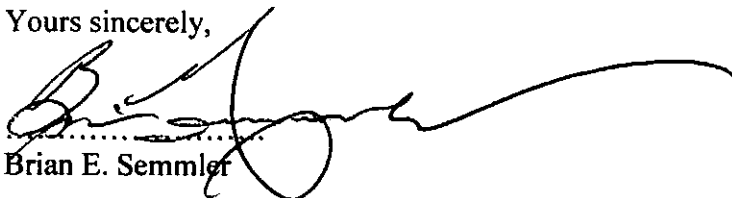
There is also no way an Elected Member can have reasonable geographical access to his/her constituents, nor they to him/her. Distances, travel time, and cost totally prohibit such access. The time involved in travel for the Member and/or the electors is exorbitant, and if the elected Member has a Ministry portfolio, the problem is vastly multiplied.

Governments are constantly advocating decentralisation because of the difficulty and cost of providing infrastructure to meet expanding city populations, and if people who might be inclined to move to rural and regional centres are not going to have equal opportunity to be heard through their political representatives because of what I've outlined, Government efforts to get people to move to these areas will be further thwarted.

Given that country people are already disadvantaged through lack of services readily available in the City and other closer settled areas, it is imperative that this discrimination not be perpetuated by yet another government Authority, the Australian Electoral Commission whose members, I would presume, live in closer settled areas, and who most likely have little or no appreciation of the disadvantage of rural and regional people.

There is, therefore, an urgent need for the proposed realignment of boundaries to be revisited, and a sense of reality brought to bear on this critical situation.

Yours sincerely,



Brian E. Semmler