



The Federal Redistribution 2006
NEW SOUTH WALES



Public Objection Number: 310

Name: The RT Rev Dr Peter BRAIN

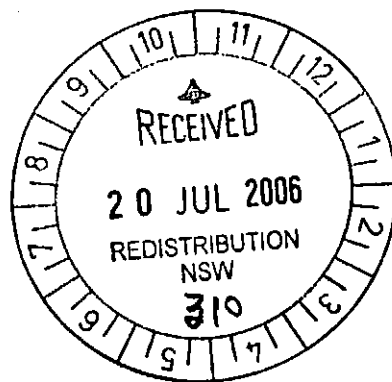
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THE RT. REV DR. PETER BRAIN

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18th July, 2006

The Chairperson
Redistribution Committee for NSW
P O Box 20014
WORLD SQUARE NSW 2002

Dear Sir/Madam,

I'm writing in regard to the proposal to merge the Federal electorate of Gwydir with Parkes,

Whilst not living in the Gwydir electorate much of the Anglican Diocese of Armidale is part of the Gwydir electorate.

I write to urge a re-think because I know just how difficult it is to address the needs of people over such vast distances. My Diocese covers 180,000 Km² and this is a difficult call, but I understand the new electorate will cover some 379,000 Km².

An important aspect of our democracy is that people and their elected representative have adequate opportunity to meet each other. It will be an impossible call for any politician to properly know his electorate under the proposed merger.

I understand that there are numerical population criteria that help drive such decisions but there must be other factors (such as access to members, local knowledge of members) that enter in.

I further understand that Gwydir was not the only seat whose population had fallen below quota. Surely other factors, such as the ones mentioned above, could be taken into account.

As one who has only lived in rural Australia for the past 6½ years (having lived in Sydney, Adelaide and Perth) I've experienced and observed the joys of living in rural Australia (with all the benefits to family life), the vital cog it is in Australia's economy and social structure and, sadly, the sense of betrayal by the cities.

To reduce the level of Federal parliamentary representation by amalgamating Gwydir with Parkes would be a retrograde step in the message it will send to people who work hard to maintain many of our essential commodities.

I do hope that you will take into account the concerns expressed in this letter as you review the proposal.

Yours faithfully,

PETER BRAIN
BISHOP OF ARMIDALE