



The Federal Redistribution 2006
NEW SOUTH WALES

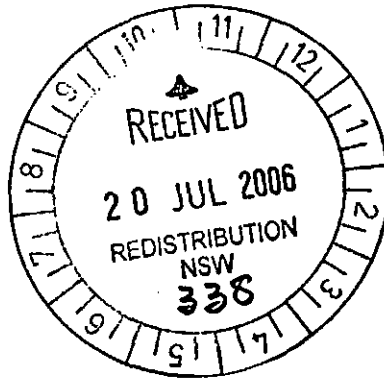


Public Objection Number: 338

Name: Mrs Margaret HURLE

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Margaret Hurle

'Little Bumble'

Bellata NSW 2397

16 July, 2006

The Australian Electoral Commission

C/- Australian Electoral Officer for New South Wales

Level 1, Roden Cutler House

24 Campbell Street

Haymarket 2000

Dear Commissioners,

I wish to lodge an objection to the proposed boundary change affecting the Division of Gwydir.

There is no community of interest across such a large area as the proposed electorate. One member has no chance of knowing and understanding all corners of the electorate and the people. Both Ralph Hunt and John Anderson were able to cover the present area only with a lot of hard work.

Conversely, the member would have no way of reaching the people



of the electorate at one time. Having worked in regional media for many years, I am aware of the importance of local radio stations and newspapers in getting across messages from politicians to the people, and the Parkes mega-electorate would have to rely on a plethora of media, which would mean uneven and unpredictable results. Not even the ABC could cover it with one or two stations.

Representing an electorate in Parliament means speaking for the people of your home district. 47 percent of the state is home district to no-one.

Federal members are significant people in the lives of country towns, and a visit from him/her is an occasion to be remembered and to take advantage of for some lobbying. If one person is covering 380,000 square kilometres, visits to individual towns will be so rare as to be one-off events. Shire councils depend on access to the local member, as do many organisations, and with the large present size of Gwydir, a well-organised and dedicated member can *just* manage to sit down and talk to them. One person covering a mega-electorate would have to pick and choose

which towns are visited and who is spoken to. In my work as a journalist in regional radio, I have seen the juggling and compromises that John Anderson has had to make to accommodate the realities of travelling across his electorate.

Although there are electorates in Western Australia which are huge, the area they cover is not as diverse as the proposed division here, so they have a closer community of interest.

There is also the significant problem of splitting Gwydir Shire between two Federal electorates.

Please look for an alternate strategy. You as an expert commission are more able to find it than I am, but surely rejigging a number of boundaries that would upset a number of people mildly would be preferable to a single stroke of the pen that is appalling a huge number of people mightily. I am one of them.

Yours faithfully,

Margaret Heule