



The Federal Redistribution 2006
NEW SOUTH WALES



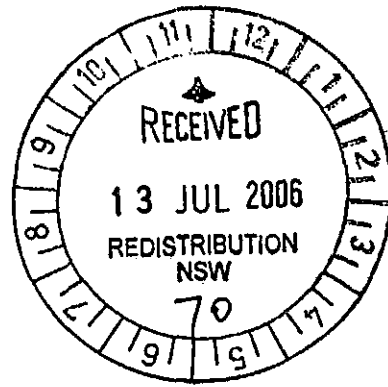
Public Objection Number: 70

Name: Mr and Mrs K and J CLIFTON

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11th JULY 2006

Redistribution Committee for NSW
PO Box 20014
World Square
NSW 2002.



Dear Sirs,

re **Proposed abolition of Federal Seat of Gwydir.**

The Gwydir electorate population is unanimously appalled at the four member Australian Electoral Commission's proposed decision to abolish their seat and make the adjoining seat of Parkes into a mega seat 5 and a half times the size of Tasmania. This is 47.3% of NSW, doubling the area from 7 local government areas to 19. If the Gwydir proposal goes ahead, it will leave only 14 rural and regional seats out of the NSW representation of 49 and give only 28% of the federal voting power. Voters already have a mega seat in state level of Murray-Darling covering 43.7% of the State. This proposed Gwydir redistribution is threatening the future of rural representation and the rights and very survival of the individual.

Submissions by three major parties using similar guidelines of community of interest, communication and transport links seem to have been ignored and previous rules apparently dismissed. People in remote areas feel abused, neglected, marginalised and not at all fairly represented especially as many Sydney seats are now under the required number for an electorate.

This decision needs to be fully redrafted as any MP would be seriously disadvantaged in practically representing remote and needy people in such a vast area. Constituents would have great difficulty getting a chance to meet their local member and the member's time to visit when parliament is not sitting, would more than double from around 3 weeks to over 6 weeks and if a minister to 19 weeks. Whereas in a seat such as Benelong a minister has to drive just a few Ks and he could almost manage on a bike to meet constituents and find out the area's needs and form future plans!!

If a seat was abolished in metropolitan areas the population would barely lose representation.

We are becoming more vulnerable to the whim of coastal and metropolitan MP's decisions.

The Electoral act or policy should be changed to make inland rural and remote areas receive more representation not less. Years ago rural votes were loaded to gain what was thought to be more equitable value and then that was lost for one vote per person but this proposed redistribution will make one vote even less value per person.

It is well known people in the bush face isolation, lower socio economic conditions, receive less medical services, have difficult and expensive communications and transport services with many minor roads still becoming impassible. The large aboriginal populations we have are neglected and discriminated against and face lack of interest which they do not deserve. Is the population count done on the electoral role or by the census?

Much is produced in these areas in NSW to provide gross national product and help keep favourable balance of payments..

The seat of Gwydir is a Federation seat formed in 1901 and is only one of three true bush seats left not being distracted by urban issues. This seat has enabled a loud clear voice to declare the big picture and get messages across for the national interest.

Many important improvements have been established in latter years by the Member for Gwydir, John Anderson who rose to deputy leader of the country through his persistence in being involved in reforming industrial relations, wharf loading areas, quarantine, meat inspectors, roads to recovery, National Heritage Trust for landcare, Auslink rail, cutting edge of research, increasing bush youngster numbers into universities, significant water management reform, amongst many things for the absolute survival of the bush within a national cohesion. There are no other truly rural seats left in NSW. Retaining the seat of Gwydir is essential for the absolute survival of inland Australia.

One would wonder how population projections have been done for the future of Gwydir with coal mining expansion already begun, ethanol production in the end stages of planning and many people now choosing to relocate from crowded, expensive metropolitan areas. This electorate is currently affected more than others by severe and lengthy drought halting much irrigation for grain and cotton and halting stock feed growth and causing people to leave properties. Of course this will pick up dramatically when the drought breaks and more labour will be needed.

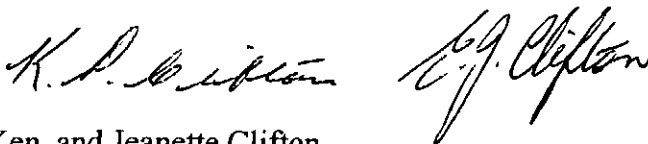
In our view the AEC is taking a most backward step in abolishing this seat and we do urge it to clearly rethink it's position and merge seats in more highly populated areas. No one will ever want to relocate to live or begin a business in inland Australia if this valuable seat is abolished. There will be no incentive at all.

It is time to question again whether local issues wouldn't be buried in the sheer geographical sacle of the proposed stupendous change?

We grass roots voters want our future MPs to be Local, Accessable aand have a sound understanding of the local issues.

We wonder if some of the reasons for this proposed decision are because metropolitan based people do not realise the conditions we inland voters live under? So we do urge AEC members to come out and visit us within the next few weeks please.

Yours faithfully,



Ken and Jeanette Clifton
PO Box 736
GUNNEDAH NSW 2380.