



**The Federal Redistribution 2006  
NEW SOUTH WALES**



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**Comments on Public Objections – Comment No: 153**

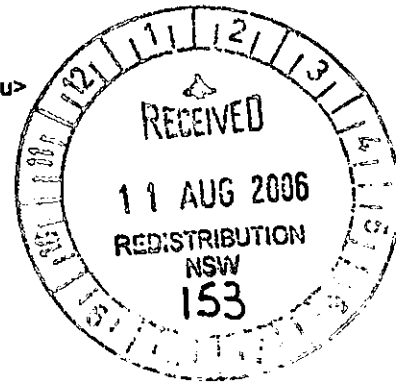
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**Page(s): 2**



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 11/08/2006 12:39 PM

To <nsw.redistribution@aec.gov.au>  
 cc  
 bcc  
 Subject Seat of Maquarie  
 Classification  Unclassified



Dear Commissioners,

As a resident of the Blue Mountains and an elected member of the Blue Mountains City Council, I write to comment on the objections submitted to the Redistribution Committee by Peter Andren Member for Calare.

1. I strongly endorse Mr Andren's comments (paragraphs 2.1, 2.2 and 3.2) about the proposed redistribution's disruption to communities of interest.

The Blue Mountains is an outer metropolitan area. Most of our community commutes to the east, either to Sydney or the western suburbs for work. The orientation is also to the east for shopping, entertainment and social activities such as sport. We have nothing in common with Bathurst and almost no connection with Lithgow and Oberon.

To require our local Member to address the issues of rural communities around Bathurst, Lithgow and Oberon will limit his ability to fully address the concerns of our residents and the issues relating to outer metropolitan areas such as the Blue Mountains. The fact is, the Blue Mountains have much stronger connections with the other outer metropolitan Hawkesbury community than it does with the rural areas west of the Great Divide.

It is for good reason that previous Redistribution Committees have taken note of the "sandstone barrier" formed by the Great Dividing Range, choosing to make any boundary adjustments along the Hume Highway rather than across the Blue Mountains.

As the Committee itself acknowledged in Paragraphs 56 and 57, the gradual transition between rural, semi-rural and urban communities is well evidenced along that corridor. By contrast, the Great Dividing Range has been seen as a much more clearly defined natural barrier, one that is well understood by voters.

2. Further, I strongly endorse the comments made by Mr Andren in paragraph 1.1 of his objections regarding the loss in representation of country voters.

The reduction in the number of divisions west of the Great Dividing Range increases their area and makes effective representation of country residents more difficult.

This problem is exacerbated by the fact that the projected enrolment in many country divisions would be above the projected mean. Of the 15 rural/regional divisions, 66% would have above average projected enrolment, but only 41% of the 34 metropolitan/urban divisions would.

This would create the anomalous situation where the divisions with the largest area and therefore greatest distances to travel, would also on average, have more constituents to service. Yet the opposite should be the case.

The proposed removal of a large rural division at an extremity of the state necessitates significant changes to a large number of other divisions. The flow on effects of this involves cutting across very significant communities of interest and long-standing and well-recognised boundaries.

By contrast, the removal of a Sydney division would entail changes to fewer divisions, particularly given that most of the south western Sydney divisions are below the projected mean enrolment. In fact, the aggregate enrolment deficit below the mean in the nine divisions in southwestern Sydney totalled 49,155, and the Greater Sydney Region has a projected total deficit of 66,755 in 2010. Thus the removal of a division in southwestern Sydney would mean less disruption across the state than the removal of a large rural division.

This argument is strengthened by the Committee's acknowledgement in Paragraph 64 of the Report that local government boundaries should be less significant in determining communities of interest in densely populated urban areas than in rural areas.

3. As a result of the far reaching changes proposed by the Committee, the anomalous and potentially confusing situation has been created where the town of Parkes is no longer in the division of Parkes and the city of Parramatta is no longer in the division of Parramatta. Further, it removes all the five original Macquarie Towns from the division of Macquarie.

Sincerely,

Daniel Myles

Councillor of the City of the Blue Mountains.

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