



The Federal Redistribution 2006  
NEW SOUTH WALES



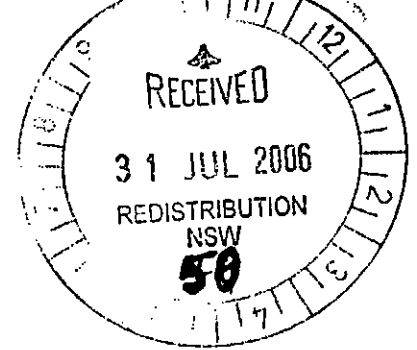
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**Comments on Public Objections – Comment No: 50**

**Name: Ms Nicki Elisabeth LONERAGAN**

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Redistribution Committee for NSW  
PO Box 20014  
WORLD SQUARE  
NSW 2002



Dear Sir,

I object to the electoral boundary changes proposed for the **Division of Calare** in the NSW Federal Electoral Redistribution 2006.

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I understand that NSW must lose one federal electorate to Queensland due to population trends and that the NSW electoral boundaries must be redrawn to equalise the number of electors in the remaining 49 federal electorates in NSW.

However, I believe that the Committee has contravened many of the basic priority principles for electoral redistributions and delivered a flawed, Sydney-centric proposal resulting in the abolition of a country seat – Gwydir – with significant, negative impacts on the remaining six country NSW electorates.

My objections relate to three main points:

1. **The abolition of the seat of Gwydir.**
2. **The transfer of the eastern section of Calare, comprising the Lithgow, Oberon and majority of Bathurst Local Government Areas (LGAs) to the proposed Blue Mountains seat of Macquarie.**
3. **The increased geographic size of the proposed Calare and other country NSW electorates.**

**Abolition of Gwydir** - I object to the abolition of Gwydir, which reduces the number of country electorates west of the Great Dividing Range from seven to six. This measure undermines the federal parliamentary representation of country NSW.

The proposed seat of Parkes absorbs most of Gwydir, and is some 100,000 square kilometres larger than the already huge existing seat of Parkes - increasing the size of the country electorates makes it impossible for any elected member of parliament to deliver quality service and properly represent the interests of their constituents.

**Eastern Calare to proposed seat of Macquarie** - The transfer of the eastern section of the existing Calare electorate, comprising of Lithgow, Oberon and the majority of Bathurst Regional LGAs, to the proposed Blue Mountains seat of Macquarie completely ignores the **community of interest** principle of electoral redistributions, currently shared strongly by Bathurst, Lithgow and Oberon as well as Orange.

Bathurst Regional, Lithgow and Oberon City Councils are members of CENTROC – the Central NSW Regional Organisation of Councils – which focuses on local government issues and cooperation relevant to the Central Tablelands and Slope and Plains regions of NSW.

Bathurst, Lithgow and Oberon have interdependent economies, including significant numbers of people commuting for employment in major local industries that also provide demand for many services throughout this area.

Bathurst, Lithgow and Oberon are also part of the central west regional and rural media footprint, sharing the telecommunications needs and problems – including access to broadband internet – that are unique to rural areas.

Sporting links between these three LGAs are extremely strong, with teams entrenched in Central Tablelands or Central West NSW based competitions. The Western Region Academy of Sport, based in Bathurst, essentially services the entire existing electorate of Calare and some regions further west, recognising the strength of the region's sporting affiliations. There is little significant sporting interaction between the Central Tablelands and Blue Mountains communities.

Bathurst is the base campus for Charles Sturt University which recently absorbed the former Sydney University campus of Orange, with both campuses working through the post-amalgamation process with the help of a common federal member.

Further, the proposed transfer of this eastern section of Calare to Macquarie splits the Bathurst Regional LGA such that the northern and southern parts will be in separate federal electorates, in blatant contravention of the community of interest principle.

#### **Proposed new seat of Calare**

There is very little **community of interest** between the Weddin Shire in the south-west (centred on Grenfell) and the Mid-Western Regional Shire (centred on Mudgee) in the north-east, yet both are included in the new seat of Calare.

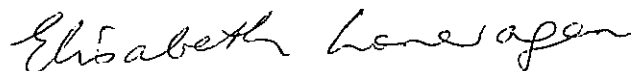
The number of large and medium population centres has increased from four (Lithgow, Bathurst, Orange and Cowra) in the existing Calare electorate, to seven (Orange, Mudgee, Wellington, Parkes, Forbes, Cowra and Grenfell) in the proposed seat, making it extremely difficult for the local member to provide the appropriate level of service to all constituents regularly.

With similar increases in size for all country seats, this scenario will result in a much lesser service for their constituents compared to Sydney city and suburban electorates, which would have more readily absorbed the abolition of a Sydney metropolitan seat without such adverse consequences.

#### **Conclusion**

I strongly urge the committee to withdraw its decision to abolish the country NSW seat of Gwydir and maintain the existing electoral boundaries of the seat of Calare in recognition of the fact its projected voter population is comfortably within the range required for this redistribution.

Yours sincerely,



Nicki Elisabeth Loneragan

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26 July 2006