



The Federal Redistribution 2006
QUEENSLAND



Comment Number 22 on Objections

Mr Charles & Mrs Alice Lenthall

6 pages

LETTER OF SUPPORT.

Ms Anne Bright
Australian Electoral Officer
AEC Queensland
GPO Box 416
BRISBANE QLD 4000

31st Jul 2006

Dear Ms Bright,

**RE: QUEENSLAND FEDERAL ELECTORAL REDISTRIBUTION PROPOSAL
COMMENTS ON OBJECTIONS – WIDE BAY REGION.**

We C.G. & A.C. LENTHALL, representing _____
voters/constituents, fully support the submission letter by Mr Glen Winney in response to
comments on the objections to the redistribution of the Federal electoral boundaries for Wide
Bay which would split the cities of Hervey Bay and Maryborough.

Yours Sincerely,

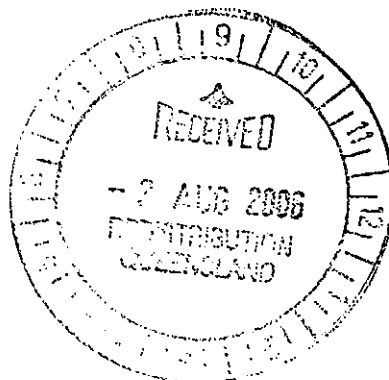
A. Connie Lenthall

Name: CHARLES G. & ALICE C. LENTHALL

Title: _____

Organisation: _____

Per. A.C. Lenthall



COMMENT

18-22

Ms Anne Bright
Australian Electoral Officer
AEC Queensland
GPO Box 416
BRISBANE QLD 4000

31st Jul 2006

Dear Ms Bright,

**RE: QUEENSLAND FEDERAL ELECTORAL REDISTRIBUTION PROPOSAL
COMMENTS ON OBJECTIONS – WIDE BAY REGION.**

I write on behalf of a large cross section of the Hervey Bay/Maryborough business community in regards to the proposed Federal Electoral redistribution for the Wide Bay Region.

Whilst we understand and empathise with the reasons behind the proposed changes and the difficult task of redistributing boundaries whilst at the same time satisfying individual needs and wants, we feel strongly that the proposed changes to our electorate would have a major detrimental impact on not only our local government, but also businesses and individuals in our area.

It is with this in mind that we urge your office to reassess the boundary changes.

As business people we fully understand that electorates need to be fair and democratic to protect the very fabric of society which we cherish. We also understand that the AEC is required to independently provide this beyond political influence.

We fully agree with the process but would like the opportunity to put forth an economic case against the current proposals prior to a final decision being made as such decision could cause many years of economic, social and cultural detriments in the Hervey Bay and Maryborough area.

We as the business community at large would like to invite a delegation from your office to spend time in both Hervey Bay and Maryborough prior to any decision being made to enable you to personally view the current inter-related structures and situations between the cities to emphasise our concerns over the effects that the current redistribution would cause.

Should you not be in a position to do this we would kindly ask that you allow us to send a small delegation of business representatives from this area to meet with your officers and put our case forward in person as well as discuss reasonable alternatives.

I would hope that after reading this submission you will understand this is not an isolated plea to amend the proposed changes, but rather a consolidated and committed group of people and organisations from the two cities who understand the impact that these changes would create. We would hope that this crucial economic decision which you are required to make will take into account the many official objections which were lodged as well as this submission supporting them.

Comments on Objections.

As per your requirements we hereby formally make comments to the objections lodged against the redistribution of the boundaries in the Wide Bay Federal Electorate. Our submission pertains to the separation of Hervey Bay and Maryborough into two separate Federal seats. The comments contained herein make reference to the following objections.

Objection Number

3	RJ Goodwin – Director, Bellerio Constructions
4	Mr John Cherry
6	Maryborough City Council
9	William B Lawless
19	Biggenden Shire Council
24	Noosa Council
40	Hervey Bay Chamber of Commerce
58	Councillor Gil Smith
59	Mrs Michelle Smith
63	Mr Lyall & Ms Gerrie Taylor
90	Maryborough Chamber of Commerce
94	Mrs Julieanne Rasmussen
100	Mr R & Ms JM Larter
117	Hon Warren Truss
124	Hervey Bay City Council
168	Burnett Shire Council
177	Mr Kevin Mahoney
180	The Nationals – Queensland
182	Hon Ian MacFarlane
187	Liberal Party of Australia

We have reviewed the above listed objections and hereby submit comments to highlight the main issues that we see affecting our cities.

The Fraser Coast region centred on Maryborough and Hervey Bay has suffered greatly in the past from a low socio-economic base and from a fractured, disjointed regional structure. That has changed significantly in the last 10 years because of a realisation that regional approaches will be needed for successful progress and regeneration of areas beyond the metropolitan cities.

We on the Fraser Coast are facing great challenges because of our ageing population, one of the highest in Australia, and because of economic forces that can limit work options. We are taking steps to meet those challenges. We have been helped to a great extent by our ability to push our case through the Wide Bay Federal Electorate with one Member of the House of Representatives able to give vigorous and comprehensive support to our efforts to improve our economic status through grants and other initiatives.

We earnestly believe our progress will be seriously compromised by splitting the two cities into separate electorates, where Hervey Bay will battle existing rivalries with Bundaberg and Maryborough will be somewhat lost in being represented with Noosa.

The synergies that have been carefully nurtured through organisations such as the Fraser Coast Enterprise Zone and the Federally sponsored Area Consultative Committee will be lost.

Hervey Bay & Maryborough are sister cities and have been strongly interdependent on one another in many aspects, not the least being business, sport and recreation, since the 1840s.

The redistribution is fundamentally flawed in that it fails to address a very important criteria set out in section 66 (3) (b) of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 which states:

- (i) Community of Interests within the proposed Electoral Division including economic, social and regional interests;
- (ii) Means communication and travel within the proposed Electoral Division;
- (iv) The physical features and area of the proposed Electoral division;
- (v) The boundaries of existing divisions in the state or territory

Your criteria, raised above, in conjunction with commonsense should suggest to the electoral commission that they reconsider splitting our two cities up. Some other issues for consideration are:

- There seems no justification to the changes except to adjust the numbers
- Many people work in Maryborough and live in Hervey Bay and vice versa
- Hervey Bay and Maryborough are promoted as a single tourism destination under the Fraser Coast

banner.

- Many businesses are linked between the two cities with premises in both cities.
- The two cities share the same health district and our hospitals share resources, professional skills and health units
- Sporting, leisure, cultural and entertainment facilities are used by constituents of both cities and are very important to this area. Hervey Bay and Maryborough share many common sporting, schooling and cultural events and organisations. There have been many combined competitions or facilities for decades. Maryborough Sailing Club has its clubhouse in Hervey Bay. Past Olympians have come from Maryborough and would not have had the early training here without the combined population being given certain funding. The Brolga Theatre in Maryborough serves both communities for entertainment and functions and was made possible through Government funding.
- Fraser Island is a world heritage listed island and a world icon which is managed by the two councils and is our number one tourist attraction. It also controls our protected waters which serve our whale watching, commercial and recreational fishing and boating industries.
- With tourism the number one employer in Hervey Bay it seems illogical that Fraser Island would be taken out of the same federal jurisdiction as Hervey Bay.
- Hervey Bay is so named because of the Bay formed between the coastline and Fraser Island. The proposed changes would put these two areas in separate Federal electorates and yet they have forever been interlinked.
- Hervey Bay & Maryborough have a low socioeconomic fabric which is fragile. If the cities are torn apart and forced to compete for federal funding through two different representatives it will be extremely detrimental to both cities when in fact we should be pulling together to receive assistance for the benefit of both cities.
- Hervey Bay has no real common community interests with Bundaberg while Maryborough has no real common interest with Noosa. The proposed changes are ignoring this issue.
- The two cities are less than 30 minutes apart and share common local government boundaries. Each year the cities grow closer together physically and economically. The redistribution would force Hervey Bay to be represented by a federal member who would live over 1½ hours drive away and who has absolutely no knowledge of or ties to our community.
- Our chain of communication with Government will be broken. While both local councils currently participate as one with the Fraser Coast Regional Forum to deal with State and Federal issues, the State Member for Maryborough has part of Hervey Bay (Howard & Burrum Heads) while the State Member for Hervey Bay takes in Fraser Island. The changes would require both levels of Government deal with the Members for Wide Bay and Hinkler on a Federal level. It doesn't make sense.
- Our communications via radio, television and newspaper are based on Hervey Bay and Maryborough news.
- There has been much discussion during the last few years in regards to future amalgamation of the two councils. While this is not planned for the immediate future it is reasonable to expect that it is a logical progression in time to come. A split in the Federal seat would see two separate Federal members dealing with this amalgamated council in the future making it an ineffective, cumbersome bureaucratic structure.
- Our transport nodes are linked with one another. Hervey Bay has a jet airport with direct flights to Sydney daily. The Tilt Train has a station at Maryborough West. Hervey Bay's only access to the Bruce Highway is via Maryborough. All these forms of transport are vital to all aspects of life and business in both cities.
- The only vehicular entry to Hervey Bay is via the Bruce Highway and then through Maryborough. Future upgrades or changes to the entry/exit to Maryborough wouldn't take into account the needs of the Hervey Bay community and we could be severely affected by this.
- Population trends – The two largest cities in this region are Hervey Bay and Bundaberg. To place them in the same Federal seat would seem to be highly unusual and not allowing for the projected future growth of both centres. Hervey Bay has a current population of approximately 52,000 and a consistent growth rate of over 5%, making it the 2nd fastest growing city in Australia. It is projected that Hervey Bay will have a population of 90,000 within the next 20 years. Bundaberg has a population of approximately 45,000 and therefore it seems that any redistribution that combines these two cities will be short lived and require further boundary changes before too long to separate the two. On the other hand Maryborough has a population of approximately 26,000 and has remained quite consistent for many years. It is also very dependent on Hervey Bay's growth for its future and conversely Hervey Bay is dependent on Maryborough's affordability and stability as it provides employment for many Hervey Bay residents through industries which have been established in the city for many, many years. Neither city has this relationship with Bundaberg.

- There is one University (University of Southern Queensland, Wide Bay Campus) that serves the two cities and actively works with both local councils, State and Federal Members whilst Bundaberg has a competing University (Central Queensland University). Should Hervey Bay be placed in the same electoral boundaries with Bundaberg the only two Universities in the region would be in the same seat.
- We have an ageing population in our area that is dependent on Federal Government benefits. If the member was based in Bundaberg this would severely deprive this sector of the community from being able to visit with their member.
- Many aged residents may be retired or in a nursing home in one city with family and friends between the two cities and need interlinked transport, health care and relevant services that both cities can currently provide.
- Millions of dollars have been spent promoting the area as a dual destination. Offering the heritage and history of Maryborough and the beach, whale watching and other recreation of Hervey Bay. Many campaigns are ongoing including Expo in Sydney to attract employment to the area. A split of the seat would financially undermine the area and the support of our Federal Member.
- Our agricultural produce is linked between the two cities with sugar cane from Hervey Bay being delivered to Maryborough sugar mills.
- The Mary River runs between the two cities, is a vital water source and has major ecological effects for both cities considering the Mary flows out into Hervey Bay's waterways. It is also vital water access to Maryborough for its vibrant ship building industries, leisure craft and other commercial businesses.
- Our police services work together with Maryborough station overseeing Hervey Bay's and one central phone number for the two.
- The proposed change would add an extra layer of bureaucracy to our two cities as they constantly work jointly for the benefit of both cities. This combined centre would be forced to compete with one another for Federal funding making it more costly and less effective for all concerned due to the competing interests.

We could provide hundreds and hundreds of different examples of the connections between the two cities and as you can see, maintaining the cohesion between the two cities is vital to their ongoing economic and social stability.

We understand that the primary motivation behind the AEC having to alter current Electoral boundaries is population numbers and the more even distribution of the same but we can only foresee a severe negative impact placed upon our two cities by the proposed changes which would tear the fabric of their relationships apart. This may have a devastating economic and social effect for decades to come.

We would ask that greater emphasis be put on these vital factors when considering the boundary changes and an understanding of the impact on the two cities and the 78,000 constituents therein who may be detrimentally effected by the change should it go through in its current form.

It is extremely important that the boundary changes are made with a full understanding of the possible ramifications and that the people effected are provided with an opportunity to speak to your officers either by them visiting the region or a delegation from the two cities personally presenting their case to you. We would like think we could work out a suitable solution to the proposed changes that provides the best outcome to all concerned.

In closing we thank you for your time and look forward to hearing from you in this matter.

'United we stand, divided we fall' Aesop.

Yours Faithfully,

Wide Bay United Committee.

This letter is representative of many people in the area. Please find listed below the persons and organisations who support this submission wholeheartedly. Also attached are various relevant newspaper clippings portraying local sentiment to the changes along with letters of support and a local petition put together this week to gauge public sentiment.

Supporters of this document: