

OBJECTION

The Federal Redistribution 2009
NSW



Objection Number 158

by

**Ian Harrison, Acting President, Tumbarumba-Khancoban Branch,
Australian Labor Party**

2 Pages

SUBMISSION TO THE AUSTRALIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION, BY THE TUMBARUMBA-KHANCOBAN BRANCH OF THE A.L.P.

The TUMBARUMBA-KHANCOBAN BRANCH OF THE ALP respectfully submits the following Protest against the removal of the Tumbarumba LGA from the electorate of Eden Monaro, and its subsequent placement in the electorate of Riverina.

The branch appreciates the need the Commission has to obtain an average number of electors in each division, and appreciates its use of flexibility in obtaining that average. However, we believe that without on-the-ground investigation by the Commission's officers of electorates where change is proposed, change based on numbers alone creates more problems than it solves for both the voters and the electorates concerned.

ELECTORAL CHANGES.

When Tumbarumba Shire was in the Federal electorate of Farrer, it lost Tim Fisher, who was replaced by Sussan Lea. Around the same time, on the State scene, we lost the very popular Daryl Maguire, when we were taken out of Wagga Wagga and put into Hume. Prior to the last election, we were out of Farrer and into Eden Monaro. Now, when we have just gained a hard working Federal representative, and in the space of one electoral term, the Commission is proposing to take us out of Eden Monaro, and into Riverina. Electors of all political stripes are both confused and angry.

This protest is formally based on the criteria used by the Commission, namely **Transport, Communication, Geographical Features, and Community of Interest.**

TRANSPORT.

The Tumbarumba Shire has no public transport. Over 20 years ago, NSW Rail ceased to serve country towns in the Riverina and the Southern Slopes. The Country Link Buses, which replaced the rail service, need 6 hours to complete a round trip from Tumbarumba to Wagga and back. Wherever it is possible, people use private transport, which means their use of medical and dental services now include the centers of Canberra, Queanbeyan, and Albury as well as Wagga Wagga. Because, despite promises, the Wagga Base Hospital has not been replaced; Wagga Wagga is falling behind in its ability to serve this community in health matters.

COMMUNICATION

Landline 'phone connection works reasonably well, although it is not unusual to have 'phones drop out during the frequent high country storms. Mobile phones, on the other hand, are often unusable because the mountains block both reception and transmission.

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Tumbarumba is in the Southern Slopes region, and is climatically very different from the plains of the Riverina. Both Agriculture and horticulture are dependent on the cooler climate and thus differ from those of the Riverina. Industry is based on forestry and grape production, with a growing tourism factor, much of which is based on the alpine scenery, and the shire's proximity to the snow fields.

COMMUNITY OF INTEREST.

Tumbarumba's cattle and sheep are still transported and sold in Wagga, but the products of its large wine and forestry industries are processed here and trucked to destinations which in most cases do not include Wagga Wagga. The Shire supports three haulage businesses. With the end of the railway system that linked the towns of the west, and the widespread use of private transport,

community of interest between the Shire of Tumbarumba and the city of Wagga Wagga, has waned. These days there are more visitors from Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne than there are visitors from Wagga.

The Branch considers this change does nothing to boost political awareness, interest and confidence in Government generally. The feeling today in the Shire is that the Tumbarumba LGA is not a community, but merely a number of voters who can be shifted anywhere when the Electoral Commission wants to balance its numbers.

The Branch further believes that the Commission would prefer its electoral charges to see it, and the democratic system of government to which it is responsible, in a far better light.

Yours faithfully,



Ian Harrison, Acting President,
TUMBARUMBA-KHANCOBAN BRANCH,
Australian Labor Party.

At the Ordinary Meeting of the Tumbarumba-Khancoban Branch of the ALP on 23/8/09, it was moved (J. Cameron) and seconded (J. Caton) that this submission be sent to the Australian Electoral Commission. The motion was carried unanimously.

