

OBJECTION

The Federal Redistribution 2009
NSW



Objection Number 177

by

**Sayo L B Dukuly, Chair, National Association of Liberian
Community in NSW Inc**

2 Pages



DEVELOP, PROTECT, AND ENRICH.

Australian Electoral Commission (AEC)
PO Box K406
HAYMARKET NSW 1240



Dear Madam/Sir

**Re: objection to the proposed redistribution and abolition of
the Federal Electorate of Reid**

I am writing to place a formal objection to the recently proposed redistribution leading to the abolition of the Federal Electorate of Reid. I am the Chairperson of the National Association of the Liberian Community in NSW (NALCIN). NALCIN is one of the two leading Liberian associations in NSW. Our aims include provision of support to newly arrived Liberian refugees and humanitarian entrants, preservation of the rich Liberian Culture and bridge-building with the wider Australian community to enhance social inclusion of all Liberians.

According to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) Community Summary, there are at least 380 Liberians living in NSW. The majority of Liberians live in the Local Government Areas (LGAs) covered by Reid. Most Liberians have arrived to Australia under the Refugee and Humanitarian Program.

Some of the issues Liberians in Reid face include: lack of understanding of Australian systems and processes including the political processes, challenges to family and community cohesion, high costs of living, impact of trauma on individuals and families, high unemployment and difficulties finding affordable accommodation. We have also brought strengths and commitment to our new homeland with us. We are a young community with a number of our members pursuing further education and we wish to be an integral part of the wider Australian community. To be able to achieve this, we feel that we need to be able to have a voice and raise our concerns and express our needs through legitimate democratic processes.

We have developed a respectful and productive relationship with the current member for Reid, the Hon. Laurie Ferguson. Through this relationship, we have developed an increased understanding of Australian political processes and were able to educate the rest of our community members. Being able to speak to the

Hon. Laurie Ferguson directly, restored our faith in democratic processes and facilitated our access to legitimate democratic participation and social inclusion in Australian society. We are worried that should Reid be divided into three electorates, our community members will be split and thus unable to successfully impact on their issues and concerns due to their small numbers in each of the 3 new electorates. Thus, we are anxious about the dissolution of Reid and feel that this will impact on our ability to have our voice heard and services provided to us in an effective way.

I am also aware that it is common that all Federal seats are named after Prime Ministers. The Federal seat of Reid was named after Sir George Houston Reid (1845-1918). He was elected to represent East Sydney in Federal Parliament in 1901 after being Premier of New South Wales. He was instrumental in advancing plans for the Constitutional Convention.

According to AEC guidelines, we understand that **divisions should be named after deceased Australians who have rendered outstanding service to their country. When new divisions are created the names of former Prime Ministers should be considered.** In this case, the committee has recommended the removal of a former Prime Minister's name and replacing with a later one. This seems like an unusual decision to us.

In the interest of the issues of refugee communities being considered political priorities and an effective and efficient avenue to progress these issues towards improvements in policy and service delivery we think that it is essential to maintain the seat of Reid. I hope this letter has provided you with some of the arguments to maintain the seat of Reid. Should you require any further information please contact me on 0413 417 518 or email me at sayodukuly@yahoo.com.

Yours sincerely

Sayo L.B. Dukuly
Chair
NALCIN

30th of August 2009