



The Federal Redistribution 2010
Victoria



**Comment Number 8
on Public Suggestions**

Tony Nutt, State Director, Liberal Party Victoria

5 pages

The Liberal Party of Australia
Victorian Division



Robert Menzies Centre
Level 3
104 Exhibition Street
Melbourne
Victoria 3000

Telephone: **(03) 9654 2255**
Facsimile: **(03) 9652 3143**
email: libs@vic.liberal.org.au
www.vic.liberal.org.au
ABN: 70 723 275 853

23 April 2010

Redistribution Committee for Victoria
C/- Australian Electoral Commission
Level 22
Casselden Place
2 Lonsdale Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Sirs,

Please find attached comments on public suggestions from the Liberal Party of Australia (Victorian Division) in relation to the redistribution of Federal Electorate Boundaries in Victoria.

If you require any further information relating to our suggestions or comments, please don't hesitate to contact me on (03) 9654 2255.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Tony Nutt'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the name.

Tony Nutt
State Director

Liberal Party of Australia (Victorian Division)

Comments on Public Suggestions

The Victorian Division of the Liberal Party submits the following observations to the Federal Redistribution Committee for Victoria.

It is not our intention to comment on every detail in each submission, rather to point out important flaws and difficulties with other submissions which the Committee may want to take into account.

For this purpose we have considered the detailed submissions provided in light of the Redistribution provisions as set out in the Electoral Act.

The Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 outlines the conditions for a Federal Redistribution in Section 66(3) as:

3) In making the proposed redistribution, the Redistribution Committee:

(a) shall, as far as practicable, endeavour to ensure that, if the State or Territory were redistributed in accordance with the proposed redistribution, the number of electors enrolled in each Electoral Division in the State or Territory would not, at the projection time determined under section 63A, be less than 96.5% or more than 103.5% of the average divisional enrolment of that State or Territory at that time; and

(b) subject to paragraph (a), shall give due consideration, in relation to each proposed Electoral Division, to:

- i. community of interests within the proposed Electoral Division, including economic, social and regional interests;*
- ii. means of communication and travel within the proposed Electoral Division;*
- iv. the physical features and area of the proposed Electoral Division; and*
- v. the boundaries of existing Divisions in the State or Territory;*

and subject thereto the quota of electors for the State or Territory shall be the basis for the proposed redistribution, and the Redistribution Committee may adopt a margin of allowance, to be used whenever necessary, but in no case shall the quota be departed from to a greater extent than one-tenth more or one-tenth less.

With these provisions in mind we have examined the submissions made and the Liberal Party wishes to raise a number of queries about boundaries, as drawn, in certain submissions.

For the purposes of these comments, the Liberal Party has taken particular, but not exclusive interest in the submission of the Australian Labor Party (ALP).

Use of tolerances

While the ALP submission asserts that it achieves the ultimate goal of having all electorates fall within the allowable tolerances, in some cases electorates such as Bendigo and Indi are at the very extremes of the +/-3.5 per cent allowance from the projected enrolment quota.

Of interest is the ALP approach to the use of the deviation from allowable tolerances at the commencement (10%) and the mid point (3.5%). It appears that when setting the deviation in a significant number of seats the ALP submission takes little heed of the projected growth figures for those seats where as the Liberal Party believes the projected growth should be reflected in the deviation from the quota and this is reflected in the Liberal Party submission.

ALP submission

In the ALP submission a number of proposed electorates raise serious questions about observance of the criteria.

The Corio electorate is one such example where these provisions have not been met. The ALP's proposal to have Corio running up the Princes Freeway (Geelong Road) into suburban Melbourne's south-west growth corridor (Point Cook and Werribee South), runs counter to the community of interest provisions. These new boundaries would see the central business district of Victoria's second largest city fall into the same division as one of the largest growth areas of metropolitan Melbourne. A more natural movement for Corio to make would be to move further into the Bellarine Peninsula, towards Queenscliff.

The dramatic change to the Corangamite electorate would leave residents stranded, removing the connection with Geelong and assuming a connection with Warrnambool and the south-west coast. Colac is the main rural centre in the current Corangamite, but under the ALP submission not only has Colac been moved into Wannon, the whole of the Colac-Otway Shire has been jettisoned. This major change will alter the character of Corangamite forever as it removes much of the rural element of this seat.

In the Melbourne metropolitan area and seats in the eastern suburbs, the proposed electorate of Deakin raises a question. The Liberal Party accepts that the general nature of community connections along Whitehorse Road predicates how Deakin is constructed. What can be questioned however is why the ALP thought it was necessary to set boundaries in what are essentially suburban streets rather than following a main road. This has left Deakin with an arbitrary

and confused southern boundary and would result in residents in the same local street being located in different electorates.

In La Trobe the proposed ALP boundaries are illogical. The Liberal Party cannot see why this proposal has shifted large portions of La Trobe's eastern side into McMillan. Given McMillan needs only minor adjustments to bring it within tolerances, the ALP's intent in shifting such a large area out of La Trobe looks to be driven by purely partisan motives.

On the north western side of Melbourne, the electorates of Lalor and Gorton need to be carefully examined. The ALP suggestion that electorate boundaries run through the satellite city of Melton would split this community. An examination of the Melton community leads the Liberal Party to believe that isolated communities such as this are best kept in the same Federal division.

The placement of Keilor, Kealba and Keilor Downs into Calwell provides boundaries for this electorate which are structurally inconsistent. Calwell would seem to be an electorate which runs in a north/south direction, roughly taking in the Craigieburn northern growth corridor. The Keilor and Keilor Downs pocket seems out of place with the rest of this electorate. A more natural boundary may be the Maribyrnong River.

In Scullin, the movement of this electorate's boundaries to the east rather than into the northern growth area of South Morang and Doreen has produced an electorate that wraps around Melbourne's outer north-east. While the Metropolitan Ring Road (which ends at Greensborough) services some residents, movement east/west across the electorate is difficult as there is no obvious transport corridor. This is unlike the area above Scullin's northern boundary which would be connected via Plenty Road.

Charles Richardson

An examination of the submission made by Charles Richardson has also raised some questions of validity. While Richardson has drawn all 37 seats well within quota, he has done this at the expense of Murray. Murray is an important seat in northern Victoria. While growth in rural areas is relatively low we cannot see the justification in making such a major change to boundaries at this redistribution.

Further, in order to accommodate the removal of Murray and the creation of an extra seat in north-western Melbourne, Richardson has made some major changes to other boundaries. Most notable is the change between Flinders and McMillan. The shifting of much of the Westernport area from Flinders into McMillan is unnecessary and illogical, as the numbers show Flinders needed to change very little from its current form to meet quota.

Concluding remarks

The Victorian Division of the Liberal Party thanks the Redistribution Committee for the opportunity to make comments on other submissions.

The Liberal Party looks forward to the release of the draft boundaries and the opportunity to work with the Redistribution Committee and the Australian Electoral Commission to ensure a proper, appropriate and fair outcome for all electors across Victoria.