



**THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Objection 327

John and Susan Lord

2 pages

3 July, 2024

Subject: Objection to Redistribution of Bennelong and Berowra

To Australian Electoral Commission

We are writing to formally lodge an objection regarding the proposed redistribution of electoral boundaries for the Bennelong and Berowra electorates. The draft proposal speaks of removing Epping, North Epping and Carlingford from Bennelong yet appears to treat the southern part of Beecroft as being Carlingford.

Having carefully reviewed the proposed changes, we believe that they do not adequately represent the interests and communities within the electorate and continue with the failure of the previous redistribution by persisting with the splitting the suburb of Beecroft into differing electorates. We therefore wish to outline our concerns as follows:

1. **Community Cohesion.** The proposed boundaries fail to recognise established community ties and cohesion. The suburb of Beecroft has historically been characterised by a strong sense of community identity, which the last redistribution failed to reflect. Prior to the last redistribution, the whole suburb of Beecroft was part of the Berowra electorate, not artificially split by the construction of the M2. The latest redistribution provides the opportunity to recognise this cohesion rather than further disenfranchising residents who identify more strongly with their suburban, economic and social interests than with the proposed attachment to the Parramatta electorate.
2. **Impact on representation:** The proposed changes will likely result in further reduced representation for demographic groups and communities of interest currently within Bennelong which are now proposed to be incorporated into Parramatta. It is crucial that electoral boundaries facilitate fair and effective representation for all constituents, and the current proposal is unlikely to achieve this goal.
3. **Practical Considerations:** There are practical implications to consider, such as the ability of elected representatives to effectively serve their constituents. The proposed changes should be evaluated not simply on demographic criteria but also on practical grounds to ensure efficient governance.
4. **Consistent Logic:** The proposed redistribution ignores the artificial M2 boundary in order to incorporate the whole of the suburb of Epping into the one electorate – Berowra. It is submitted that the same logic be applied to the suburb of Beecroft, such that it too becomes incorporated into the same electorate, viz Berowra. The area of Beecroft south of the M2 is still socially and economically part of the Beecroft suburb with a strong community of interest to Beecroft as a whole and so constitutes a very weak link to the Parramatta region.
5. **Alternative Proposal:** We propose that alternative boundary configurations be considered that better recognise community integrity and ensure effective representation. This would involve adjusting boundaries to better align with natural suburb divisions and considering feedback from local stakeholders.

6. Transparency and Consultation: It is essential that the redistribution process be transparent and inclusive. We would urge the Commission engage in meaningful consultation with affected communities and stakeholders before finalising any decisions.

In conclusion, we request that the Australian Electoral Commission carefully reconsider the proposed redistribution of boundaries for the Berowra, Bennelong and Parramatta electorates in light of the concerns here raised. It is imperative that electoral boundaries reflect the interests and needs of the communities they serve, and that changes are made with due consideration to effective representation and community cohesion.

Thank you for considering this objection. We would be happy to further engage in this important process.

Yours faithfully,

John and Susan Lord
(residents of [REDACTED] Beecroft)