



Objection 366

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2 pages

Objections to the proposed redistribution in McEwen

An electorate is a geographical area of Australia represented by a member of parliament elected to the House of Representatives. The aim of an electorate is to keep people with similar concerns and issues together within the same electoral division to ensure their interests are adequately represented.

I highlight this again, as I have in previous suggestions and comments, regarding the long-standing issues that need to be addressed within the electorate of McEwen to ensure fair and representative electoral divisions.

The draft boundaries for the electorate of McEwen still see the seat sprawling in an east-west fashion, with some changes.

Out of McEwen:

- Kilmore SA2 moved to Nicholls electorate.
- Part of Panton Hill – St Andrews SA2 moved to Casey.
- Whole of the Mernda SA2 moved to Scullin.

In McEwen:

- Part of the Mickleham – Yuroke SA2 (Kalkallo).

It makes sense to unite Kilmore with the rest of the non-urban part of Mitchell Shire. Additionally, keeping Wallan and Beveridge united with other parts of Melbourne's urban growth area, including Beveridge, Wallan, Kalkallo, and Donnybrook, also makes sense as these are rapidly growing areas.

Given the aforementioned changes, I would like to suggest some more common-sense adjustments to the draft report concerning the electoral redistribution for McEwen and surrounding seats. These adjustments aim to enhance the coherence and representational equity of electoral divisions, particularly focusing on McEwen, Casey, and Scullin.

Proposed Adjustments:

- **Panton Hill – St Andrews SA2:** Entirely allocate to Casey.
- **Mernda South SA2:** Retain entirely within McEwen.
- **Wollert SA2:** Fully allocate to Scullin.

These adjustments will deliver better community cohesion and effective representation within each electorate. Specifically, retaining Mernda South within McEwen ensures that the growing community remains unified, benefiting from consistent representation and streamlined service delivery.

Rationale for Mernda and Doreen Unity:

- **Community Identity:** Mernda and Doreen share significant infrastructure, educational facilities, and community organisations. They also share the same postcode (3754) and participate in common local leagues and activities, such as the Northern Football League and regional sports events.
- **Shared Facilities:** The shared facilities underscore their interconnectedness and shared development interests of Mernda and Doreen. Both suburbs will be served by the Aquatic and Sports Centre in Mernda, providing vital recreational and sports facilities. Mernda station serves as the primary railway access point for Doreen and Mernda, demonstrating strong infrastructural links between the two suburbs. Similarly, another example is the Mernda town centre, which is a shared facility that includes the Mernda Library and the upcoming Mernda Community Hospital.

- **Administrative Coherence:** Both towns fit entirely within the state seat of Yan Yean and have historically been represented together at local government levels, Mernda is now its own local government electorate, emphasising the importance of maintaining their unity at the federal electoral level.

Realignment of McEwen:

- **Outer-Suburban Focus:** McEwen should contract and consolidate towards outer-suburban growth areas, ensuring a more compact and cohesive community of interest. This realignment acknowledges the demographic shifts and growth patterns projected for the region.

Community of Interest Considerations:

- **Geographical Cohesion:** By aligning electoral boundaries with transport corridors and community hubs, such as highways and major roadways, we can enhance geographical and community coherence within each electorate.
- **Population Growth:** The projected population growth in areas such as Mitchell Shire underscores the need for well-defined electoral boundaries that can effectively accommodate and represent these burgeoning communities.

These proposed adjustments would help address the some of the current fragmentation and geographical sprawl of McEwen while ensuring that communities like Mernda and Doreen remain united and effectively represented. I urge the Commission to prioritise these considerations in the final redistribution plan, as they align with principles of fairness, representational equity, and community cohesion.

Thank you for considering these suggestions. I look forward to a redistribution that reflects the best interests of the electorate and its residents.

Yours sincerely,
D.G. Clarke