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Submission FOB198

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From: [REDACTED]
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Kuplis, Jeremy - Redistribution TAS - Submission on the proposed Tasmanian redistribution (feedback)

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Submission on the proposed Tasmanian redistribution details

Category: Names

Details: I object to the suggested name change for the Division of Franklin to become the Division of Tongerlongeter. While a change of name may be considered, the proposed new name comes across as a poorly researched, failed attempt to diversify that will result in more division.

Changes to Division names are uncommon, and already the Division of Batman was changed to the Division of Cooper, an aboriginal activist. To rename a second division after another aboriginal/first nations person will send mixed signals and is not consistent with reflecting the names of those involved positively contributing to the forming of our electoral and government systems to get Australia to where it is today.

The history of Tongerlongeter is loosely documented, but by all accounts is marked with violence, refusal to accept outsiders, and a combatant against the very democratic government system of which this Division forms part. The attempt to force the name and memory an individual from another culture, is disrespectful and clearly goes against what he fought for.

The Division of Denison was relatively recently changed to the Division of Clark, in order to better align with the name of someone who helped form the current electoral procedures, and replace the name of someone who, like Tongerlongeter, has a chequered history. Renaming Franklin to Tongerlongeter would fly in the face of reason for the Denison change.

Although the new boundaries no longer actually include the namesake town of Franklin, there is no reason the two need to actually be linked. In fact, this will not be the first time the Division of Franklin has had significant boundary changes. I would fully support retaining the name Franklin as it represents a man who not only represented Tasmania as Lt Governor, but represents much of what Tasmania is all about. He came from a family of farmers and merchants, he represented his country in the Royal Navy, where he served with his cousin Matthew Flinders, the first recorded person to include Tasmania as part of Australia. He survived a sinking to become a distinguished polar explorer, and was knighted for his efforts to his country before his appointment to Tasmania as Lt. Governor.

Then one must also consider the name Franklin is not unique to Sir John, but also belonged to his highly esteemed wife Lady Jane, who did so much to develop public areas, education, and advancement whilst in Tasmania. Also highly regarded as an explorer, and awarded the Royal Geographical Society's Founder's Gold Medal, she undertook many cultural initiatives, fought for women's rights, opened the botanical gardens to the public, founded the museum, became the first European woman to climb Mount Wellington/kunanyi, and even walked the overland route to Macquarie Harbour.

Together they adopted an orphaned aboriginal girl during their time in Tasmania, learning her culture and giving her support. When they were to return to England they recognised the bond this girl had to Tasmania, to her people, and made the painful yet later proven correct decision to allow her to remain in the care of Tasmania, and not be a victim of what later became known as "the stolen generation" by transporting her to the other side of the globe at a time when travel was unsafe and to where she would no doubt have been treated not just as an outsider but as a focus of unsocial behavior. They showed respect for the aboriginal culture, even though Lady Jane would have benefited from the bond when Sir John subsequently went missing on another expedition.

If any change were to be made, I urge the electoral commission to add Lady Jane Franklin alongside her husband Sir John Franklin, as Division namesakes, dual representatives of the people, illustrating equality, determination, courage, and inclusion.
