



Submission FOB243

Anonymous 54

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To: [FedRedistribution - TAS](#)
Subject: [Redistribution TAS - Submission] *WWW* [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Tuesday, 21 July 2026 12:07:48 PM
Attachments: [REDACTED]

Form submitted: 21/07/2026 12:07 PM

Redistribution TAS - Submission on the proposed Tasmanian redistribution (feedback)

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Submission on the proposed Tasmanian redistribution details

Category:

Names

Details:

I write to provide a submission supporting the retirement of the electorate name Franklin but rejecting the AECs proposal to rename the electorate as Tongerlongeter. I also suggest the AEC has not sufficiently conducted public consultation to justify this proposed change.

Submission to the proposed Tasmanian redistribution – renaming of Franklin electorate
21/07/2026

I write to provide a submission supporting the retirement of the electorate name 'Franklin' but rejecting the AEC's proposal to rename the electorate as 'Tongerlongeter'. I also suggest the AEC has not sufficiently conducted public consultation to justify this proposed change. I have chosen to provide this submission anonymously as I do so in my capacity as a private citizen of regional Tasmania.

I note the AEC's name change proposal is based on the following principles:

1. That the significant change in electorate boundaries *may* justify renaming the division;
2. That most of the 68 initial consultation submissions considered by the AEC proposed or supported a name change;
3. That the AEC is considering four name proposals (Tongerlongeter, Mathinna/Metineh, Jessie Spink Rooke, and Woureddy/Wureti).

While I agree with these principles for renaming the division of Franklin, I raise several concerns about the consultation process and the justification for the proposed renaming to Tongerlongeter. Namely:

- 1. That the significant change in electorate boundaries *may* justify renaming the division, and**
- 2. That most of the 68 initial consultation submissions considered by the AEC proposed or supported a name change.**

I note that the AEC is broadly unsure about the justification for the name change and is primarily using public submissions as its justification. The AEC announcement notes that 'electorate names should not be changed or transferred to new areas without *very strong reasons*', with the naming guidelines specifically saying, '*every effort should be made to retain the names of original federation divisions.*' I also note that the AEC is conducting this additional consultation process as its name change proposal was not part of the committee's original proposal and has given the public only one week to provide their submissions.

The AEC considers the changes to Franklin an 'augmentation and renaming' question despite acknowledging the "nature and extent of the change to the reconfigured electorate of Franklin" as a justification for the proposed renaming. Considering the major changes and renaming, the proposal could be considered a de facto abolishment of Franklin and establishment of a new electorate. However, given the AEC's consideration of the changes as an augmentation, the 'very strong reasons' threshold for renaming applies.

The AEC says that it considered the extent of boundary changes, and the majority support of the 68 initial submissions to the proposal, as its justification for a name change. I suggest this does not reach the 'very strong reasons' threshold for a name change to an existing division in accordance with the AEC's renaming policy.

The primary reason for this is that this significant decision cannot be made on submissions alone as this is not a representative sample of the communities impacted by the proposal. Submissions bias those with opinions that are strong enough to justify navigating the submissions process, and inherently bias those that are politically engaged and have a high degree of literacy and access to online submission platforms. As many of the affected communities are in regional Tasmania and low SES areas of Hobart's metropolitan area this is a very concerning justification as it does not best allow for these communities to voice their concerns.

I also express deep concern about the AEC's public consultation proposal, with one in-person meeting being held in Hobart as part of a brief one-week public consultation period for a name change not previously communicated. This excludes those communities most impacted by the proposal through a high barrier to access- especially communities around Great Oyster Bay who are almost three hours from Hobart, and for whom the AEC proposes to 'honour' through the proposed name change. I urge the AEC to conduct further community consultation, especially with these most affected regional communities, through targeted consultation.

3. That the AEC is considering four name proposals (Tongerlongeter, Mathinna/Metineh, Jessie Spink Rooke, and Woureddy/Wureti).

While I dispute that the proposed name change meets the AEC's threshold of 'very strong reasons' as justification – I do appreciate the significance of the opportunity to establish a new name. According to AEC data, only 16% of Australian electoral divisions are named for an Indigenous person or word. Of those, only 6 are named after Indigenous people specifically. I believe it is in the interest of the Tasmanian public to have Indigenous history and culture recognised in the democratic process through a division name, and so I support the renaming proposal in principle. However, I note concerns about some of the proposed names, especially the proposed name 'Tongerlongeter'. Namely:

- **Tongerlongeter**

While Indigenous resistance to colonisation should be recognised, I have significant concerns about naming a division for prominent figures associated with violence and murder during the Black War, which is also used as justification for moving away from colonialist leader names.

Proposals named after people should bring the public together through recognition of community and democracy building efforts, and I have concerns that the proposed name Tongerlongeter is divisive as a political attempt to conflate Indigenous political resistance with violence – especially when now applied to regional communities around Great Oyster Bay who retain colonial ancestry directly affected by that violence.

The AEC's proposal specifically also notes that Tongerlongeter's leadership can be somewhat connected to "a significant factor in major colonial government responses, including the declaration of martial law in 1828 and the Black Line campaign in 1830," a painful history of Indigenous and colonial conflict that is still subject of significant political debate and revision, which is not appropriate for recognition through a division name that should bring together communities in Australian democracy.

This is already an AEC precedent, such as the naming of Bonner in Queensland for the first Indigenous Australian to sit in Parliament, and Cooper in Victoria named for William Cooper's democratic movement for Indigenous recognition.

- **Mathinna/Metineh**

This name violates the AEC's naming policy on geographical names, which states locality or place names should generally be avoided. This is especially notable as the township of Mathinna, and notable tourism site Mathinna Falls, are close to the boundary but not within the new division, which may cause significant confusion.

- **Jessie Spink Rooke**

While a justified proposal as a significant historical figure – Rooke was a colonial figure, she didn't move to Australia until her adulthood, and I believe this contravenes the opportunity to recognise Indigenous Tasmanians through the naming proposal.

For these reasons, I consider the proposal **Woureddy/Wureti** to be the most appropriate. Woureddy is already a recognisable and celebrated figure in Tasmanian political history – his image is closely associated within Tasmania and across Australia with Indigenous struggles for political agency, and his wife Truganini is a well recognised Indigenous woman to the Tasmanian public and has been closely associated with successful modern Indigenous Tasmanian political movements for recognition through the ending of the 'successful genocide' narrative.