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Submission OB62

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The Electoral Commission

South Australia Redistribution

Proposed Redistribution of South Australian Electoral Divisions March 2026

I wish to make comments on the redistribution proposal of 27 March 2026.

I am a private citizen making a representation as an individual. I have made many submissions over the years in federal, state and territory environments, at the initial through to the final stages of redistributions. I had not made earlier submissions on this occasion with respect to South Australia.

The Report

I note the explanations of the commissioners in articulating their proposals. The changes proposed are fairly modest, although the two way adjustments involving Kingston are avoidable.

All the proposals meet the primary criteria of numerical compliance and but I believe they fall short in some ways on the secondary criteria of:

- Community of interests within the proposed electorate, including economic, social and regional interests
- Means of communication and travel within the proposed electorate
- Physical features and areas in the proposed electorate (i.e. prominent geographic features)
- The existing boundaries for that electorate

Other contributors

I noted that many contributors have done so for other redistributions currently in

progress.

Commentary

The renaming of Grey to O'Donoghue is appropriate. I had worked with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) and had the pleasure of meeting her. The naming addresses both the shortage of Divisions named after women and increases the presence of Aboriginal names.

The changes (or lack of) to Barker, Makin, Boothby, Hindmarsh, Adelaide, Sturt are reasonable and in three cases absolutely minimalist.

O'Donoghue and Spence

Spence is a Division that will continue to experience rapid population growth for sometime. The situation it faces is similar to that other parts of Adelaide have undergone, rising population, possibly declining population, then densification of suburbs. Studying electoral boundaries over the period 1949 to now would show how much things have changed.

The commissioners had previously determined to attach Gawler to a metropolitan division. It is quite possible that in the future Gawler may need to be detached from a metropolitan division, particularly if there is the continued growth of northern Adelaide's population, or there is an expansion of the House of Representatives. Gawler is sufficiently far from Adelaide and has such a sufficiently separate history and location that it could be easily done.

The inclusion of the semi-rural area of Buckland Park and Virginia that is rapidly urbanising is a novel solution to increase enrolments in O'Donoghue. It is evident that the rapid rise in enrolments in Buckland Park arises from a significant urban development. I accept the logic of the proposal, but I suggest a clearer boundary solution.

The commissioners proposed boundaries cut back and forth over a Council boundary between Playford and Salisbury and isolate the township of St Kilda from the rest of Spence.

I would suggest that a clearer boundary would be to utilise the North South Motorway south as a boundary all the way to the Little Para River. The advantage of this is to remove the isolation of St Kilda by placing it with its surrounding areas in O'Donoghue. The additional electors involved are small but would add to O'Donoghue, decrease slightly the enrolment of Spence and provide a clear and likely durable boundary beyond the life of this redistribution.

Kingston and Mayo

I have previously lived in South Australia and had lived in the south western suburbs of Adelaide and served in the Marion Council. I was somewhat surprised by the proposed

changes involving a two way transfer of virtually the same number of electors between Kingston and Mayo. I appreciate at times that numerical issues can lead to less than optimal boundaries, and that some exchanges make sense. This is not one of them.

Electors if they interact with their elected representatives increasingly use electronic means, rather than face to face contact. The federal members for Kingston and Mayo have electorate offices in Morphett Vale and Mount Barker respectively.

Distance from an elected members office is only one measure of accessibility, but it suggests the existing distances from Aldinga to Mount Barker is 41 KMs (using direct distance), and Happy Valley to Morphett Vale is 7 KMs. The proposed distances from Aldinga to Morphett Vale is 18 KMs, and Happy Valley to Mount Barker is 26 KMs. The advantage in the change is marginally beneficial to Aldinga and hugely detrimental to Happy Valley.

The drawing of the boundaries also isolates residents in Flagstaff Hill from much of Kingston as the Happy Valley Reservoir is a large unpopulated void in the area. In a practical sense it may not be that important, but Flagstaff Hill residents would be slightly closer to the electorate office of the member for Boothby in Glenelg than Morphett Vale.

In summary

My proposed changes for O'Donoghue and Spence involve a small number of electors, but I would argue rely on much sounder boundaries. My suggestion that the two-way exchange between Kingston and Mayo not occur. This would substantially reduce the number of electors moved between Divisions in the state.

I wish the commissioners well in their deliberations.

Martin Gordon

28 March 2026