



THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
QUEENSLAND

Comment on suggestion 11

John Gayler

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Friday 2nd June. 2017

The Secretary
Electoral Commissioner
Australian Electoral Commission
7th Floor
488 Queen Street
BRISBANE 4000

Dear Secretary

With reference regarding the redistribution of Federal Divisions in Queensland I wish to submit the following in relation to the Division of Leichhardt.

I was the Federal Member for that Division for ten (10) years, 1983 – 1993, and I believe I have a thorough knowledge of the electorate.

During that period there were two redistributions, one of which was held after the increase in the House of Representatives in 1984 which resulted in the excision of the Atherton Tablelands and the ‘Gulf Country’.

This area was annexed to the Division of Kennedy.

In the 1992 Redistribution the boundary on the coast was shifted north to the southern boundary of the then Mulgrave Shire (now the Cairns Regional Council), transferring the then Johnstone Shire to the Division of Kennedy, including Innisfail.

Over successive redistributions the boundary has progressively shifted north to the present boundary, Blackfellows Creek at Edmonton.

Also, the 2006 redistribution transferred the Yarrabah Aboriginal Community to the Division of Kennedy.

This has occurred because of the continued growth in the population of the Cairns region.

In my view there is no viable alternative than to bring the boundary further north along the coast.

I believe that the alternative to excising further suburbs to the south of Cairns is unacceptable.

This would involve transferring Cape York Peninsula (hereby referred to as 'the Cape') and the Torres Strait Islands (hereby referred to as 'the Islands') to the Division of Kennedy, as suggested by the LNP, which in my view is ludicrous and nonsensical.

These residents rely on the City of Cairns for services not available locally, such as medical.

There is no road public transport to 'the Cape' and beyond.

The only public transport is by air and the Cairns Airport is the hub for these services.

When residents come to Cairns for e.g. medical treatment they invariably need assistance dealing with Commonwealth Departments such as Centrelink and Veterans Affairs.

Without their Federal Member having an office in Cairns they would be denied such assistance

It is the practice of Local Members of Parliament to refer constituents from outside their electorate to their respective Local Member.

At present the nearest office of the Member for Kennedy is Innisfail, which is an hour's drive from Cairns,

The public transport to Innisfail is limited to the long distances buses of which there are five (5) services, each way, per day (24 hour period)

It would be a 'working day's effort' to go to Innisfail by public transport to visit the Local Member's Office, and return.

During my time as the Member my office assisted many constituents from remote areas with their requirements.

On reviewing the submissions made, particularly that of the LNP, I am of the view that the author of that submission has scant or little knowledge of the Division of Leichhardt and with respect I would suggest that their submission should be dismissed 'out of hand'.

Should there be public hearings convened in Cairns I would welcome the opportunity to appear and give what ever assistance I can to the Augmented Commission.

Yours faithfully,

John Gayler