

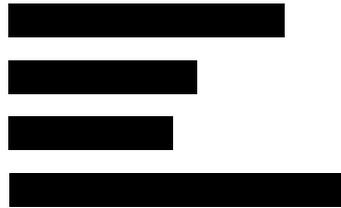


THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
QUEENSLAND

Comment on suggestion 1

Martin Gordon

3 pages



The Commissioners
Federal Redistribution of Queensland

Dear Commissioners,

I wish to make some comments on redistribution submissions for the state of Queensland.

It is not my intent to be particularly critical of other contributors but make passing observations.

I note that several contributors noted as I had:

- the relative narrow band of variation in elector numbers across the Divisions; and
- that many Divisions required relatively minor adjustments.

Electoral fairness - Both the Greens and Jeff Waddell raised the electoral fairness issue. Whilst it is not a consideration for the redistribution (but certainly at the state level in South Australia), it is nonetheless a serious issue.

Kennedy and Leichardt - A drastic redrawing of Kennedy is proposed by several contributors (Waddell, Yore, LNP and McSweeney) placing most of the states greatest concentrations of indigenous electors in one Division, and breaking with a long tradition, largely driven by the substantial elector growth in Cairns and surrounds. Consequently Leichardt is proposed to be quite a small Division largely confined to the coast and the Cairns Regional Council.

Herbert - With respect to Herbert the LNP has made a similar proposal to mine making use of the Ross River and utilizing the Townsville Council Boundary to the north of the city. The general theme of submissions is that convergence points of several Divisions seem to be a consistent theme no matter how boundaries are drawn to overcome them.

Capricornia - The inclusion in Capricornia of Charters Towers in addition to myself was a solution proposed in two other submissions (McSweeney and the Greens). The Greens however bring

Capricornia too close to Townsville, which will become an issue for electors on the outskirts of Townsville. In the submission by Dean Ashley (page 15) describes including Gladstone in Capricornia but submission does not actually propose this, I also noted that Capricornia was proposed to be at the very low end of elector projections. The submission by the Pirate Party (page 23) proposes a worse split of Mackay than at present (to boost numbers in Capricornia), with the city substantially split between Dawson and Capricornia. It notes that in the past Rockhampton was in pre 1984 the most northerly part of the Capricornia Division, but there has been 11 new electoral Divisions added since then to Queensland, resulting in very significant boundary changes (the 11 Divisions are Flynn, Hinkler, Fairfax, Longman, Dickson, Bonner, Rankin, Forde, Moncrieff, Blair, Wright)

Dawson - Following the comments about Capricornia above I note that with Dawson there were several submissions proposing significant changes for Dawson, these all necessitate very large consequential changes to neighboring divisions, which is a factor in my not making changes to Dawson given the very large impacts.

Bonner and Griffith - Jeff Waddell proposes a alternative for Bonner and Griffith involving swapping Bulimba and Mount Gravatt. This enables a more defined north-south boundary between the Divisions. I had considered a similar solution for a state electorate boundary, this in a federal setting has merit.

Brisbane - The positions of the Greens in respect of proposals for the Division of Brisbane basically reverses the 2009 redistribution changes and involve a very large change to most north Brisbane Divisions, which is largely unnecessary. To accommodate all the population movements it is possible to make a series of relatively small changes that do not require wholesale changes for electors.

Moreton and Oxley - I would restate that a more substantial change to the boundaries of both Divisions is desirable as the population movements in the south western corridor of Brisbane are significant, and placing Oxley in a more southerly position south of or along the Logan Motorway is a better long term solution for electors in this part of Brisbane than is currently the case or the minor adjustments proposed in other submissions.

Minimum change advocacy and impact on elector tolerances - Whilst I have pointed to features of the LNP (some of which I have indicated agreement with above) and Pirate Party proposals, they and the ALP propose some minor changes which lead to significant variances between even neighboring Divisions for no real reason. Given the anti system positioning of the Pirate Party I would have expected a proposals advocating significant changes.

There are some nine submissions relating to the Moore Park Community and Whilst I appreciate their community has a view about access to a elected representative, their situation is not unlike many electors who may have 'a long distance relationship with their MP' or live in an area that seems 'disconnected' to an electorate. The primary factor in boundary placement relates to elector numbers and the other factors are secondary to that. I wish them well in their pursuit, but there are more than 3 million electors with various concerns to consider too.

Conclusion

I wish the Commissioners well with their deliberations.

Martin Gordon

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