



Suggestion 1

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2 pages

Changing the name of the Division of Stirling to the Division of Hawke

CONTEXT

The Australian Electoral Commission has begun its redistribution process for the next Federal Election, which is due by 2022. Due to a decline in the rate of population growth in Western Australia (WA), a redistribution is underway in WA. WA will lose one seat in the House of Representatives, as a result of this redistribution process. This means that WA would have 15 seats moving forward, rather than the existing 16 seats in the House of Representatives. As a result of this, it is expected that many, if not all, WA Federal electoral boundaries will be redrawn.

PROPOSAL

Rename the existing seat of Stirling to Hawke.

THE CASE FOR

Why not Stirling?

> The Pinjarra Massacre of 1834 was the deadliest recorded massacre in Western Australia's history. It is unknown exactly how many Noongar men, women, and children were killed, but some estimates are as high as 80. The colonial forces who perpetrated the massacre against the South West's First Nations Noongar people were led by colonial WA Governor Sir James Stirling.

> Recently abolished Divisions named after colonial State Governors include

- Denison (Tasmania, abolished 2019),
- Phillip (NSW, abolished 1993).

> Recently abolished Divisions renamed due to their namesake's poor treatment of First Nations people:

- Batman (Victoria, replaced by the Division of Cooper in 2019). John Batman is known to have killed many First Nations people in Victoria.
- McMillan (Victoria, replaced by the Division of Monash in 2019). Angus McMillan led multiple expeditions that killed First Nations people in Victoria.

Why name it Hawke?

> It has become customary that when former Australian Prime Ministers pass away, they have a Federal Electoral Division named in their honour in their home state.

> Bob Hawke passed in 2019, two days before the most recent Federal Election.

> Bob Hawke's formative years were spent in Perth and Mr Hawke considered himself to be a Western Australian.

> The areas of Perth where Mr Hawke lived during his childhood, and were educated in, are currently in the Federal Electoral Divisions of Perth and Curtin. At the time, during the 1930's and 1940's, the electorates of Curtin and Perth extended over the area currently classified as the Division of Stirling.

-Perth is of course centred around Perth city and was one of the original 75 electorates contested in the first Federal election in 1901. It is unlikely to change names.

-Curtin is of course already named after a former Prime Minister in John Curtin. It is also unlikely to change names.

> The geographically closest electorate to these areas is Stirling. It should change names.

> Additionally, then, it does not need to focus on the Local Government Area of the City of Stirling. Although not explicitly referenced in the naming of the Division, the Division does appear to largely centre on the Local Government Area of the City of Stirling.

Why now?

>The redrawing of Federal Electoral Division boundaries in WA, required before the next Federal Election, provides an ideal time to rename an existing Division.

CONCLUSION

>Therefore, due to Governor Sir James Stirling's abhorrent treatment of First Nations peoples, most notably in his command of the Pinjarra massacre, the Division of Stirling must be renamed. The new name is suggested to be the Division of Hawke, in honour of former Prime Minister Bob Hawke.