



Suggestion 112

Chad Fenton-Smith

2 pages

From: Chad Fenton-Smith [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 10 November 2017 12:55 PM
To: FedRedistribution - SA
Subject: S.A. Redistribution - Mayo is a unique and rural seat and deserves to remain so.

To the Redistribution Committee for South Australia,

I am writing to make a submission to the South Australian Federal Redistribution being undertaken by the Australian Electoral Commission.

I am a constituent of the Federal Division of Mayo and I have been for over a decade now. Mayo is a unique seat – one that has been through recent tough times with sitting members. Mayo has slowly evolved to a bit of a centrist seat – our current Independent NXT candidate is evidence of this but also formerly Democrat John Schumann came within a handful of votes of defeating a popular Minister in Alexander Downer in 1998. We are unique. Have a look at the past 20 years of results – in particular Independent, Democrat and Greens votes.

Mayo voters are politically active – Mayo has such a high number of election day and political party volunteers several parties have waiting lists to hand out election day how-to-vote cards and install street signage. We are engaged and active as we care about the Fleurieu Peninsula and the Adelaide Hills which share many characteristics. Wine, dairy, farming, mining and eco-tourism industries exist side-by-side. We are passionate about Mayo. I believe you will receive a high number of submission that will reflect this.

I strongly believe that the Division of Mayo should NOT be abolished in this redistribution process. I also hope any change to reduce Mayo boundaries allow Mayo to retain it's rural and green character and personality. I hope that the committee responsible for managing the redistribution please consider;

1. Communities of Interest within the proposed electorate, including economic, environmental, social and regional interests.
2. Means of communication and travel within the proposed federal electorate
3. The physical features of an area of the proposed federal electorate.

Communities of Interest:

The community of Mayo recently elected our first Independent MP and since then, the work of our new MP has been sensational. We have a local team player looking after all of our interests for the first time since Mayo was created. After playing with the idea of a non-Liberal or Labor MP for a few decades, voters have quickly warmed to the independent status of Mayo and we are PROUD to remain strongly independent. Mayo celebrated the NXT win, even those who did not vote such, admitted that independents can get things done. Such seats are very rare in Australian politics, there are just a handful in any election. To see one of these rare independent seats abolished risks the argument that the decision was influenced by the 2 major parties. In the Australian political landscape independent voters are increasing and seats that have taken this 'chance' should be rewarded for enriching the political sphere that often remains stagnant for decades. Of course it is not for the AEC to b

e partisan in seat distributions, but abolishing one of the very rare independent seats would be terribly disappointing. Not just for Mayo, but for the other 25-30% of Australian voters across all States and Territories who do not allocate their primary vote for the large 2 parties.

In an economic sense, Mayo contains the vast majority of South Australia's horticulture industry and unique, important wine regions. I believe it is better that these important businesses in our community are represented by someone who understands the issues they are facing and the people in the industries and regions, rather than being represented by someone based in the city, CBD or inner suburbs. We are rural.

At the recent election, the results from the ballot boxes show a consistent vote for our current independent Federal Member. I believe this shows a desire across the region for a strongly independent voice in Federal Parliament, and it would be disappointing if this was lost due to the electorate being abolished.

Physical Characteristics:

The Hills Face Zone is a large planning zone in South Australia that restricts development in the Adelaide Foothills and Mount Lofty Ranges. As a result of this zone, there is an effective barrier between metropolitan Adelaide and the communities of the Adelaide Hills. It does not make sense for these two distinct areas to be represented by a metropolitan based electorate.

The Lower Lakes separate riverside communities including Goolwa, Milang and Currency Creek from the Division of Barker. This creates a true physical barrier between Mayo and Barker.

Population Growth in Key Areas:

Mayo currently has 3 fast growing communities in Mount Barker, Victor Harbor/Goolwa and Strathalbyn. Mount Barker in particular currently has a population nearing 40,000, but this is projected to increase to around 60,000 by 2038. It would not be fair for an area of this size to be included within a metropolitan seat boundary, as the needs and experiences of the voters would be considerably different. Additionally, with the growth in Mayo among SA's strongest, there is chance that when the 150 seats of Parliament are increased some time in the future, Mayo will require another re-distribution to represent this growth. Mayo will possibly return in the decade or two ahead in some shape or form. That's a lot of work and resources for the AEC to repeat in a short time. Surely areas of low growth should be merged or abolished.

In the Victor Harbor council area there are currently ten individual residential developments occurring in Hayborough, Port Elliot, Victor Harbor and Encounter Bay. Long considered a retirement town, the South Coast is now growing constantly in size and population. But it still has that country town character, similar to Mount Barker. The South Coast is distinctly different from the Southern Suburbs and should remain Mayo.

I hope you will consider my submission, and that we can keep the Division of Mayo as one of the ten very unique and different electoral divisions in South Australia. I hope any boundary changes to Mayo allow us to remain wholly rural and not a mix of rural and metropolitan suburbs.

Yours sincerely, Chad Fenton-Smith [REDACTED]

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