



Comment on objection 39

Australian Labor Party (South Australian Branch)

4 pages

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
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Subject: [SA REDISTRIBUTION COMMENTS ON OBJECTIONS] Steven May *WWW*
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South Australian Redistribution comment on objections uploaded from the AEC website.

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**COMMENTS ON OBJECTIONS TO THE PROPOSED REDISTRIBUTION OF
SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

MADE TO THE

AUGMENTED ELECTORAL COMMISSION FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA

BY THE

AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY (SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BRANCH)

25 May 2018

The Australian Labor Party (South Australian Branch) welcomes the opportunity to make comments on objections received to the Redistribution Committee for South Australia's proposed redistribution and determination of the names and boundaries of electoral divisions in South Australia, for consideration by the augmented Electoral Commission for South Australia.

Boundaries

The Australian Labor Party notes the majority of objections reflect on the proposed boundaries of the division of Boothby, in particular where it is proposed that it cede suburbs to Kingston and Mayo. In the original submission to the Redistribution Committee (S208), the Australian Labor Party noted that Kingston could absorb remaining suburban areas of the Onkaparinga local government area that are currently located in Boothby, principally around the suburbs of Aberfoyle Park and Happy Valley. The Australian Labor Party reiterates its agreement with the decision of the Redistribution Committee to consolidate these two suburbs, as well as Flagstaff Hill, in Kingston, and urges the augmented Electoral Commission to uphold this proposal. As identified by the Redistribution Committee at page 38 of the proposed redistribution, these suburbs share a community of interest and the Australian Labor Party believes this is appropriately defined by the Onkaparinga local government boundary.

The Australian Labor Party recognises objections have also been made to the inclusion of the suburbs of Craighburn Farm and Hawthorndene in Mayo, rather than in Boothby. With respect to Mayo, the Australian Labor Party has already submitted that there is potential to gain from the fringes of Boothby. In response to the objections received about creating divisions in the Mitcham Hills communities, the Australian Labor Party again notes its suggestion to the augmented Electoral Commission that it may wish to consider adding additional suburbs from the Mitcham local government area from Boothby into Mayo, thereby uniting the Mitcham Hills in Mayo. Similar suggestions along these lines have been made by other objectors, including Archbishop John Hepworth (OB272) and the Liberal Party of Australia (South Australian Division) (OB318).

As noted in its objection (OB312), the Australian Labor Party strongly condemns the actions of the current Member for Boothby in soliciting objections to the proposed boundaries from residents of suburbs currently contained within that division. The Australian Labor Party previously cited an email entitled "Urgent: Radical Boundary Change to Your Suburb" that contained a link to a website set up by the Member for Boothby, which automatically generated objections using supplied text. It is evident from the objections received that the same process was used for proposed changes to both the division in which Aberfoyle Park, Flagstaff Hill and Happy Valley are located, and the division in which Craighburn Farm and Hawthorndene are located.

The submission, comment and objection process is a legitimate opportunity for individuals to put their case to the Redistribution Committee or the augmented Electoral Commission as appropriate. This process is compromised when members of parliament interfere to write template submissions for others. The Australian Labor Party notes that the Member for Boothby did not choose to register her own objection to the proposal of the Redistribution Committee. The Australian Labor Party sees the method used by the Member for Boothby to generate robo-submissions as a shameless attempt to preserve political interests rather than broader community interests and has confidence that the augmented Electoral Commission will treat any such submissions accordingly.

Naming of electoral divisions

The Australian Labor Party has previously advocated the retention of all six federation names in South Australia. In particular, the Australian Labor Party strongly objected to the decision not to retain the name Wakefield. The Australian Labor Party further notes that if the name Spence is adopted as proposed, given many of the suburbs in this division were previously located in the division named Bonython prior to the 2003 Redistribution, it would be the third name for a division applied to these areas in fifteen years. The Australian Labor Party continues to urge the augmented Electoral Commission to restore the name Wakefield to the division that has been proposed to be called Spence. The Australian Labor Party welcomes other objections that support this position, in particular, the strong claim that is made for retention of the name Wakefield by the former member and speaker of the House of Representatives, the Honourable Neil Andrew AO (OB320).

In the 2003 Proposed Redistribution of South Australia, the Redistribution Committee noted (at page 12) the following rationale for the retention of the name Wakefield instead of utilising the name of the abolished division of Bonython or the imposition of another name:

The Committee notes that although the majority of electors within the proposed boundaries of Wakefield are from the existing division of Bonython, the majority of the land area is from the existing division of Wakefield. The Committee also considered the fact that the division of Wakefield was first proclaimed in 1903 and that the name had been in use since, whilst the division of Bonython was not proclaimed until 1955. Given that the guidelines for naming divisions contains a preference for maintaining original Federation Divisions, of which Wakefield is as close as we come in South Australia, the Committee strongly lent toward using the division name of Wakefield. Lending further weight to this argument was the fact that Edward Gibbon Wakefield, after whom the division is named, is famed for his plan for systematic apportionment of land within this state. It seems appropriate for this reason also to retain this name in a redistribution.

The Australian Labor Party believes the rationale expressed by the 2003 Redistribution Committee provides, on the whole, additional valid reasons for the retention of the name Wakefield. The vast majority of the land area in the proposed division of Spence is from the current division of Wakefield, analogous to the circumstances that existed between Wakefield and Bonython in 2003. Further, unlike in 2003, the majority of electors within the proposed boundaries of Spence are also from the existing division of Wakefield, being 87,035 at Monday 4 September 2017 or 93,051 projected electors as at Thursday 20 January 2022.

In its objection, the Australian Labor Party proposed an alternative option for the augmented Electoral Commission to consider if it retained the name Wakefield but also wished to make use of the name Spence, by renaming the division of Sturt. The Australian Labor Party would not support the use of Spence as a replacement for the name of any other division.

Conclusion

In all other aspects, the Australian Labor Party recommends the comments contained in its original submission, comments on submissions and objection to the augmented Electoral Commission.