



# Comment on objections 44

Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation,  
Bunurong Land Council and  
Bass Coast South Gippsland Reconciliation Group

2 pages

## **Bass Coast/South Gippsland Reconciliation Group**

*An affiliated group of ANTaR and Reconciliation Victoria*

### **Comment on Objections to the Victorian Redistribution Committee Proposal Electorate of McMillan/Monash May 2018**

**From the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation,  
Bunurong Land Council and  
Bass Coast South Gippsland Reconciliation Group**

GLaWAC, BLC and BCSGRG again write to express our request that the Redistribution Committee, having now expunged the name of McMillan, follows this first reconciliatory step by granting the electorate an Aboriginal name.

Of the 419 objections, 49 refer to the Monash division, 33 with an exclusive focus, while three deal with boundary issues only. Of these, 29 argue for an Indigenous name rather than Monash, a further seven argue against McMillan and/or against Monash as the replacement name. Seven seek to retain McMillan, and two are in favour of Monash. One argues for diversity.

The arguments against Monash do not come only from within the electorate. There are forceful arguments, particularly from the municipality of Monash, that seek to persuade the Committee of the relevance of consolidating the various Monash attributions in one place rather than scattering them across competing regions. We agree wholeheartedly with this position and the confusion to be wrought by such an almost random allocation of a name. (While Monash established the SEC in Gippsland he is associated with other professional and personal responsibilities in other parts of the State, so why us, we ask). We also agree that Monash has had significant reward for his contribution to society and it is not necessary to expand the list of credits to his name when a better opportunity exists to make some amends for 'sins of the past'. We further draw your attention to the lack of enthusiastic response in the electorate for the name. Not only are there only two supporters in this Objection phase, but local media and general commentary has been underwhelming in its support for the name.

The strength of the argument for an Aboriginal name rests on:

- the right to justice of the thousands of Aboriginal residents who live in the electorate and in the areas of Gippsland impacted by colonial dispossession and massacres, led by McMillan
- the wishes of voters to live in an electorate that honours the lives of Aboriginal heroes, in numbers uncalculated but expressed by those who took the trouble to comment to the AEC, to write letters to local papers, to sign petitions, eg David Hollis's, to ring talkback programs, to attend fora conducted by BCSGRG, to read supportive material, and to discuss it in their networks.

Expunging McMillan's name is the first part of justice being served. We ask that you also deliver the second part.

We note that McMillan/Monash is not the only seat where there is a strong call for Aboriginal recognition, one especially in the naming and one protesting the loss of an Aboriginal name. As an Aboriginal name is favoured 'where appropriate, and as far as possible existing Aboriginal divisional names should be retained' is part of AEC guidelines for renaming, it is difficult to understand why this appears to be a sticking point for the Redistribution Committee.

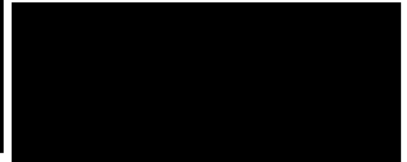
While Bunjileene-Purrine was the preferred name of the representative Aboriginal Naming Committee, we have indicated the willingness of the Committee to reconvene to develop a more acceptable name should the Redistribution Committee deem fit. We urge you to take one of these options: the offered name or a new one in consultation with an Inquiry the AEC may set up.



/Grattan Mullett  
A/CEO, GLaWAC



Dan Turnbull  
CEO, BLC



Dr Marg Lynn  
Secretary, BCSGRG