



Objection 396

Glen Donahoo

2 pages

I write in support of the proposed boundaries of the electorate of Cox and Wannon as outlined in the *Proposed redistribution of Victoria into electoral divisions April 2018*.

Without the Colac and Colac Region SA2s the proposed division of Wannon will have a projected enrolment of 100,716, which is well below the minimum projected quota of 106,509. This means that without these SA2s Wannon would have to find between 5,793 and 13,519 voters from another division to meet the projected quota. The only divisions that could supply Wannon this population would be Ballarat, which is already transferring 4,149 voters to Wannon and would not be able to transfer any more voters without splitting the population centre of Ballarat, which should be avoided if possible, and Mallee, where the only population centre of the necessary size that could be transferred into Wannon is Horsham, which if transferred would cause Mallee to be under the minimum projected quota by 6,834 voters. Thus removing Colac from Wannon would likely require a substantial redistribution of Mallee, which itself would be complicated by the lack of significant population areas in north-west Victoria and would likely require substantial redistributions in the divisions of Bendigo and Nichols to facilitate this redistribution.

While some submissions may argue that Colac's connections with Geelong and the Surf Coast means it should be within Cox, the primary consideration in subsection 66(3) of the CEA is the projected enrolment. The projected enrolments of the proposed division of Cox (which includes the Surf Coast), and to a lesser extent Corio (which includes most of Geelong), suggest these areas are forecast to grow more quickly than either Wannon or Colac are projected to. Further the alternate options for population centres moving into Wannon of Ballarat and Horsham also have strong shared communities of interest and transport links to population centres within their current divisions which they would have to be separated from. The connection that Colac has with Geelong and the Surf Coast is no stronger than Horsham has with the many towns surrounding it and that towns like Buninyong have with Ballarat. As such Colac's shared communities of interest should not be prioritised over those of Ballarat and Horsham.

Due to the fact that adding the SA2 of Otway (that includes Apollo Bay) to Wannon would put Wannon over the permissible maximum number of electors, including Colac in Wannon does necessitate splitting the Colac Otway Shire between two divisions (Wannon and Cox), however this Shire has two significant but distinct population centres: Apollo Bay (which will be in Cox) and Colac (which will be in Wannon). Apollo Bay, a coastal tourist destination, shares substantially greater communities of interest with other similar towns to be located in Cox such as Lorne, Anglesea and Torquay (all located in the Surf Coast Shire LGA) than the relatively inland town of Colac, so splitting the Local Government Area (LGA) this way is consistent with the communities of interest provision of sub-paragraph 66(3)(a)(i) of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 (CEA) and also allows the strongest communities of interest to be retained.

Given that the enrolment of the proposed Cox is projected to grow more than 5% by August 2019, compared to Wannon's less than 0.5%, it is likely that the next redistribution will see Cox shrink even more geographically to take account of its growing population and will also see Wannon grow to compensate for its low population growth. It is possible that the Redistribution Committee has a long-term view to eventually also including the SA2 of Otway into Wannon in a future distribution

to ease the pressure on the proposed Cox and meet the population requirements of Wannon, re-uniting the Colac Otway Shire LGA.

As such it is numerically infeasible to continue to include Colac in the proposed division of Cox, and would require the arbitrary prioritisation of certain shared communities of interest and transport links over the substantially greater shared communities of interest that other population centres have that would need to be ignored.