



Objection 382

Colac District Cricket Association (Junior Committee)

2 pages

Australian Electoral Commission
Redistribution Committee

Re: Colac District Cricket Association (Junior committee) objection to the proposed redistribution of the Federal electorate of Corangamite.

We are as a local committee are a subcommittee of the Senior Association who we believe will be making a submission as well. We administer the Junior cricket competition, and as such organise representative games of cricket.

We have real concern with the proposed redistribution of current federal electorate Corangamite.

1. Links to the east

Our “community of interest” or our connection is to our East, not to our West, with relationships and connections to Birregurra, Apollo Bay, Geelong. Our Junior competition covers Apollo Bay, Dean Marsh, Lorne, Birregurra, Irrewarra, all areas that would be separated from Colac.

We have strong links with affiliated organisations to our east. Geelong hosts a number of regional head offices for sporting and community organisations. Cricket Victoria and our local governing body Barwon Cricket is based in Geelong, the proposed boundary realignment would see result in organisations and teams in local leagues being split between two electorates. This could impact funding and support for such bodies. It is hard enough for a community organisation to make submissions to one person let alone having to do it twice.

Junior representative cricket is based on a “pathway”, where talented players move up through the Geelong Rockets process, which is similar to AFL, with the Geelong Falcons. This is further proof of our connection to the East and not to the West.

As an association we have regular contact with clubs to our East such as Winchelsea and Modewarre and never to the west. As we have a lot more in common with the East.

2. Access to our local member

Ease of communication with the local member of parliament is very important. Our current member has an office in Colac and at worst has an office an hour away in Geelong.

Under the proposed boundary redistribution our local member would have their office in Hamilton which is over two hours away. This would drastically limit access to our local member. We would, in most cases, have to discuss issues with two representatives which would mean additional time and resources and invariably lead to time delays in decision making.

As a Junior Association we investigated 3-4 years ago the idea of affiliating our association to the West instead of to the East, i.e. we questioned would we be better off? as we sometimes feel we are under the shadow of big city Geelong and have more in common with the smaller communities to the East i.e. Hamilton and Warrnambool. **Upon review and examination we recognised very quickly the difficulty of the significant distances that the Wannon electoral has, and the distance from Colac that Hamilton is. This reinforces our view that the redistribution should not go ahead as proposed.**

3. Colac Otway Shire

The Colac Otway Shire is currently contained within the Corangamite electorate. Under the proposed redistribution the shire would be split between the expanded Wannon electorate and the proposed Cox electorate. The community has strong links with Geelong, the Surf Coast and the Otways, hence its name. These links should not be broken.

Regardless of which party may hold the seats it would require the shire dealing with two members. As it is likely that from time to time electorates could be held by different parties there are likely to be different policies or priorities that could impact the shire. This could lead to prolonged deliberations before decisions are made. Such delays could seriously impact the operations of business and community organisation.

4. Colac is a successful and growing regional Community

Colac is a success story in regional Australia, with strong employment and growth prospects. This is based around many factors, such as our strong employment, strong community spirit and location relative to a large city.

As a growing regional location, we believe that the AEC should not be doing anything to jeopardise this story. Our connection to the East is one of the foundations of Colac's success. There is no gain for Colac to become part of Wannon and we only face risk and uncertainty.

5. The name "Cox"

We strongly object to this name, it has no relevance to our area. The Corangamite name as both an indigenous word and the title of our seat since Federation, and the name of one of our largest natural features, needs to remain. The slang connotations of "Cox" should also rule this name out. As an association we recognise the "traditional owners of the land", and we believe not enough is done in regional Victoria to support our indigenous communities. Removing the same Corangamite, is further erosion.

In summary we believe that Colac should not be isolated from its close ties to its east with communities in and around Geelong, the Surf Coast and the Otways. Timely access to our local member is important and is highly valued.

We trust that you will give these concerns due consideration.