



Comment on suggestion 41

Liberal Party (Victorian Division)

14 pages



2020-21 Redistribution of Victoria's Federal electoral boundaries

Comments on
Suggestions to the
Redistribution Committee
for Victoria



The Liberal Party
of Australia
(Victorian Division)

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INTRODUCTION

The Liberal Party of Australia (Victorian Division) (the 'Liberal Party') welcomes the opportunity to comment on Suggestions received by the Redistribution Committee for Victoria.

Subsequent to the call for Suggestions, the Redistribution Committee for Victoria received 102 Suggestions. Out of these, 34 Suggestions considered division boundaries (with some also considering division names) and the remaining Suggestions considered division names or other issues. The Liberal Party's Comment on these Suggestions will only be considering the Suggestions relating to division boundaries. Additionally, the Liberal Party's Comment on Suggestions does not attempt to cover all the issues raised in all the Suggestions, but focuses on the key areas of contention and agreement among the Suggestions to assist in the Redistribution Committee for Victoria's deliberations.

PLEASE NOTE, the details of the Suggestions referenced in these Comments are listed in the Endnotes at the end of this document on page 13.

KEY THEMES IN SUGGESTIONS

In recognition of the creation of a new division in Victoria, there was considerable movement of electors between divisions in the Suggestions received. In particular, the creation of the New Division somewhere in and around Metropolitan Melbourne to the north of the Yarra River was a consistent theme in the various Suggestions that caused significant movement of electors in the northern and western suburbs of Melbourne. Additionally, the Yarra River was suggested to regain its status as the significant boundary within Metropolitan Melbourne, which caused additional movement of electors both to the north and south of the River.

There were significant challenges in addressing the growth in the south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne, where a number of Suggestions (see S13, S70, S85, S90, S100, and S101) observed the difficulty in meeting the enrolment requirements in the Divisions of Holt and La Trobe given their high project growth and relatively low actual enrolment. This is a challenge, as will be discussed further below, which impacts boundaries further to the north-west if not appropriately resolved, however, the general alignment of the south-eastern suburbs between the Divisions of La Trobe, Holt, Flinders, and Dunkley was proposed to remain intact.

A number of Suggestions proposed divisions that were distinctly metropolitan or regional/rural in character, while others advocated for increased numbers of divisions that straddled both Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria. While at times it may be unavoidable to have divisions that are a mix of metropolitan and regional areas, such combinations should be avoided lest representation of electors in metropolitan areas be diminished by a focus on regional issues and vice-versa. Wherever and to the greatest extent possible, divisions should be distinct in their demographic and socio-economic character to best enable their elected representatives in Parliament to advocate on behalf of their community.

REGIONAL VICTORIA

Corio and Corangamite

Among the various Suggestions, there is a broad consensus about the boundaries of the Division of Corio remaining unchanged that the Liberal Party supports (see S24, S31, S90, S93, S97, S99, and S100). It is important that where possible boundaries are maintained. While this may limit the options for transferring electors from the Division of Corangamite that needs a reduction in its size, there are other options available to the Redistribution Committee to address this issue.

Changing the boundaries of the Division of Corio would inevitably lead to the undesirable fragmentation of communities in the city of Geelong, on the Bellarine Peninsula, and in neighbouring Local Government Areas that the previous Redistribution Committee addressed by focussing the Division of Corio on the city of Geelong while the Division of Corangamite was focussed on the areas surrounding Geelong, including the Bellarine Peninsula and the Surf Coast.

Of the Suggestions that considered the boundaries of the Division of Corangamite, there were two options canvassed. The first option, in line with the Liberal Party's Suggestion (S90), required minimal change to the

boundaries of the Division of Corangamite by only removing the split parts of the Local Government Areas of Colac-Otway Shire and Golden Plains Shire, with the proposed division remaining otherwise unchanged and incorporating the whole Surf Coast Shire Local Government Area with the parts of the Greater Geelong City Local Government Area that are not currently in the Division of Corio (see also S24 and S97).

The other option considered splitting Surf Coast Shire Local Government Area, transferring Winchelsea out of the Division and, alternatively, maintaining the coastal part of the Surf Coast Shire Local Government Area or transferring it out as far as and including Anglesea (see S31, S34, S43, S93, S99, and S100). This had the consequence of requiring the Golden Plains Shire Local Government Area to remain split and either remaining in the Division of Corangamite or being transferred into the Division of Corio with consequential changes splitting either suburban Geelong or the Bellarine Peninsula.

Local Government Areas are significant indicators of communities of interest, especially in regional areas, and should only be departed from where there are overwhelming factors, for example the numerical enrolment requirements in the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (the 'Act'), that justify such a departure by the Redistribution Committee. Local Government Areas have been correctly used extensively by previous Redistribution Committees to distribute electors in accordance with the section 66 criteria in the Act. As the Liberal Party's Suggestion (S90) demonstrates, such departures from Local Government Area boundaries in the Divisions of Corio and Corangamite are not necessary and the two divisions can be contained within the Greater Geelong City, Queenscliffe Borough, and Surf Coast Shire Local Government Areas, with Greater Geelong City being split, along community of interest boundaries, due to it containing more than one enrolment quota.

Ballarat

There were various Suggestions for the boundaries of the Division of Ballarat, that ranged from extremely radical (e.g. S100) to the minimal (e.g. S90). Significantly, every Suggestion for the boundaries of the Division of Ballarat was impacted by the location of the New Division that is being created in Victoria.

While the location of the New Division will be discussed later in more detail, the distribution of all or part of the Moorabool Shire Local Government Area into a metropolitan division caused considerable transfers of communities from the Division of Ballarat that orient more towards Ballarat and the surrounding regions than they do towards Melbourne. Additionally, transferring the Moorabool Shire Local Government Area out of the Division of Ballarat had consequential impacts on the boundaries of all Divisions in northern and western Regional Victoria.

The impact of removing the Moorabool Shire Local Government Area from the Division of Ballarat is most noticeable in the Australian Labor Party's Suggestion (S100), where all of the Moorabool Shire Local Government Area is transferred into the proposed New Division, and where the proposed Division of Ballarat is centred on the City of Ballarat, but also incorporates all of the Golden Plains Shire and Hepburn Shire Local Government Areas, thereby creating a division in the shape of the letter 'C' that wraps around the Moorabool Shire Local Government Area. The issue of which division Bannockburn should be located in is clearly one that should consider which of the Geelong (Corio) or Geelong-interfacing (Corangamite or Wannon) Divisions it should be in and not whether it should be in the Division of Ballarat, especially one that does not include the Moorabool Shire Local Government Area.

As previously stated, Local Government Areas are significant indicators of communities of interest, and transferring the part of the Moorabool Shire Local Government Area in and around Bacchus Marsh to a metropolitan division would be a significant departure on community of interest grounds, as Bacchus Marsh maintains a rural/peri-urban nature. The new housing developments surrounding Bacchus Marsh share more in common with similar developments in Ballarat that are distinct to those in western suburbs of Melbourne.

Moreover, by aligning the boundaries of both Ballarat and Bendigo to Local Government Area boundaries, namely, Moorabool Shire, Ballarat City, Hepburn Shire, Mount Alexander Shire, and Greater Bendigo City, it is possible to minimise the number of split Local Government Areas to only one, namely Hepburn Shire. There is also the advantage that these changes to the Division of Ballarat mean that it does not gain any new electors and also leads to better alignment of communities in the Division of Bendigo by transferring out those parts of the Macedon Shire Local Government Area that are currently split which can then be combined within one division.



■ Wannon

The general consensus among the Suggestions is that the Division of Wannon should be a south-west coastal division from the South Australian border moving west along the Princes and Hamilton Highway corridors. While the various Suggestions for the Division of Wannon would be acceptable in isolation, there are a number of consequences elsewhere in Regional Victoria that need to be considered when setting the northern and eastern boundaries of the Division of Wannon.

The main issue is, if the eastern boundary of the Division of Wannon is not sufficiently shifted east to gain electors from the rapidly growing Division of Corangamite, there are substantial distortions that occur elsewhere in Regional Victoria. As noted above in relation to the Australian Labor Party's suggested Division of Ballarat (S100), it leads to unnecessary pressure on the Division of Ballarat that consequently impacts on the Divisions of Bendigo, Nicholls, and McEwen.

The Division of Wannon is best placed to accommodate electors from the Division of Corangamite to ensure Corangamite meets its required enrolment, while also recognising the communities of interest and means of communication and travel in the eastern parts of the Division of Wannon that generally interface with Ballarat or Geelong rather than Warrnambool or Hamilton.

■ McEwen

Going into this Redistribution, the Division of McEwen straddled the boundary between Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria, incorporating Melbourne's outer suburban growth corridor with semi-rural and peri-urban areas on Melbourne's fringe and beyond. This was due to the excess quotas in both Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria at the time of the last redistribution that made it not possible to create a distinctly regional or metropolitan Division of McEwen. As such, it is inevitable that there will be a difference of opinion in the Suggestions on the nature of the Division of McEwen.

The creation of a New Division in Metropolitan Melbourne, makes up for the excess quota at the last redistribution and, together with the relatively higher growth in Metropolitan Melbourne, allows for a Division of McEwen that is distinctly regional, with the relatively small shortfall in quota being able to be made up from peri-urban communities in the north-west of Metropolitan Melbourne that integrate with the communities in Central Victoria (see S90 and S93).

The main issue with the Suggestions (see S13, S34, S43, S70, S87, S97, S99, S100, and S101) that propose a Division of McEwen that remains a mixed or predominantly metropolitan electoral division is that it mixes communities of interest between regional, peri-urban, and outer metropolitan growth suburbs without maintaining congruity between the different parts of the division. Additionally, this is either caused by or causes similar issues with coherency within other proposed divisions throughout Regional Victoria and at its boundary with Metropolitan Melbourne.

As shown in the Liberal Party's Suggestion (S90), it is possible to ensure that the Division of McEwen is predominantly a regional electoral division while also maintaining the existing number and internal coherence within all regional Divisions. If the New Division is appropriately located to address the excess quota of electors between the northern and western suburbs of Melbourne, it is possible to ensure a well-defined boundary between Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria and minimising the amalgamation of different communities without an incongruous electoral division that unnecessarily spans too many split Local Government Areas.

METROPOLITAN MELBOURNE

In the Suggestions, there was a general point of agreement that the Yarra River should be the major boundary in Metropolitan Melbourne, which, as a consequence, would also require the northern boundary of the Division of Menzies to recede to the Yarra River as it was prior to the last redistribution. An additional benefit of using the Yarra River as the boundary within Metropolitan Melbourne also means that it is possible to consider those areas to the north and south of the River independently and recognise the important links of the Eltham community to the west in Montmorency and Greensborough that were raised by a number of Suggestions (see S10, S19, and S29).

METROPOLITAN MELBOURNE – SOUTH OF THE YARRA RIVER

Suggestions that considered the boundaries of Divisions to the south of the Yarra River, generally settled on maintaining the current boundaries in the Divisions of Aston, Dunkley, and Flinders (see S24, S31, S43, S70, S85, S90, S97, S99, and S100). Additionally, there was a common view that the necessary transfer of electors to account for the growth in the outer south-eastern suburbs and the loss electors from the north of the Yarra River in the Division of Menzies would be made through successive transfers of electors via the Divisions of Chisholm, Hotham, and Bruce.

Menzies and Deakin

There is general agreement in the Suggestions that the boundaries of the Divisions of Deakin and Menzies should contain the Local Government Areas of Manningham City, Maroondah City, and a northern part of Whitehorse City. Once the external boundary of these two divisions is determined, it is possible to minimise the impact on the surrounding Divisions and consider the main point of contention among the Suggestions in relation to the alignment of the boundary between the Divisions of Deakin and Menzies.

The two main alignments of the boundary between the Divisions of Deakin and Menzies that have been suggested can be summarised as follows. The first alignment splits the Maroondah City Local Government Area approximately along the Maroondah Highway, with the northern part being transferred into the Division of Menzies and the southern part remaining in the Division of Deakin (see S28, S31, S34, S70, S99, S100, and S101). Consequently, the Division of Deakin then gains electors from the Division of Chisholm in the northern part of the Whitehorse City Local Government Area. As a result, the Division of Menzies contains all of the Manningham City and part of the Maroondah City Local Government Areas; and the Division of Deakin contains part of the Maroondah City and part of the Whitehorse City Local Government Areas.

The second alignment unites in the Division of Deakin all of the Maroondah City Local Government Area with minimal change to its parts of the Whitehorse City Local Government Area, while the Division of Menzies maintains all of the Manningham City Local Government Area and gains parts of the Whitehorse City Local Government Area (see S43, S85, S90, and S97).

It appears that the resolution to this point of contention is simply in which division should the northern part of the Maroondah City Local Government Area (Ringwood North, Warranwood, Croydon Hills, and Croydon North) be distributed and, similarly, in which division should the northern part of the Whitehorse City Local Government Area (Box Hill North and Blackburn North, and parts of Box Hill, Blackburn, and Nunawading) be distributed?

These questions need to be resolved to achieve the optimal outcome in accordance with the criteria in section 66 of the Act. One way of resolving this is to consider the various Activity Centres across the Divisions of Deakin and Menzies and how they connect and relate to these two areas.

At the heart of the Maroondah City Local Government Area is the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre. The Activity Centre consists of services and amenities that residents in the northern part of the Maroondah City Local Government Area depend on. The Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre is the closest Activity Centre for Ringwood North and Warranwood, while the Croydon Major Activity Centre is the closest Activity Centre for Croydon Hills and Croydon North. The strong links between the northern part of Maroondah City Local Government Area and these Activity Centres is demonstrated by the strong transport links to them, best illustrated by Bus Route 380 (Ringwood-Croydon Loop) that links these areas with the Activity Centres and the southern parts of the Maroondah City Local Government Area. The Maroondah City Local Government Area is also covered by one major local newspaper, the Maroondah Leader that is based out of Ringwood and reports on local news for the whole Maroondah area. In terms of community health services, the Maroondah Hospital is the main health facility for all these areas throughout the Maroondah City Local Government Area. The Maroondah City Local Government Area is a cohesive community with very strong interconnectivity throughout and it is difficult to reconcile splitting the Maroondah City Local Government Area in two on community interest grounds, where it is possible to achieve a more optimal outcome in another way while ensuring compliance with section 66 of the Act.

While the northern parts of the Whitehorse City Local Government Area orient towards the Box Hill Metropolitan Activity Centre, due to the enrolment requirements under section 66 of the Act, it is not possible to have all the areas serviced by the Box Hill Metropolitan Activity Centre within one



electoral division. Therefore, it is necessary to consider which surrounding areas best conform to the section 66 criteria in the Act. If one considers the Major Activity Centres in the current Division of Menzies that are located south of the Yarra River, the Doncaster East-The Pines and Doncaster Hill precincts serve their local communities and share considerable links with the Box Hill Metropolitan Activity Centre more so than any other. Similarly, the suburbs of Box Hill North, Blackburn North and Blackburn rely on both the Doncaster Hill Major Activity Centre and the Box Hill Metropolitan Activity Centre, but less so on the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre, with those communities, as well as those to their north in Doncaster and Doncaster East, using the facilities at Box Hill Central and Westfield Shoppingtown in Doncaster. This is further reinforced by the connectivity in this area of five major roads across the Eastern Freeway, namely Elgar Road, Station Street/Tram Road, Middleborough Road, Blackburn Road/Surrey Road, and Springvale Road.

It is also worth noting the various community precincts and organisations that cover these communities that span the northern parts of Whitehorse City and the south-eastern parts of Manningham City Local Government Areas. The Box Hill Hospital health precinct is also the nearest hospital for residents in the suburbs of Doncaster, Doncaster East, Blackburn, Blackburn North, and Box Hill North. The Secondary School catchment zones for Doncaster Secondary College, Blackburn High School, and Koonung Secondary College include Doncaster, Doncaster East, Box Hill, Box Hill North, Blackburn and Blackburn North, demonstrating the integrated education links across the area. Similarly, sporting clubs and organisations operate across Doncaster, Doncaster East, Box Hill, Box Hill North, Blackburn and Blackburn North, with the Blackburn Vikings Basketball Club, which is one of the largest sporting clubs in the Whitehorse City and Manningham City Local Government Areas based in Blackburn North as well as at East Doncaster Secondary College.

Overall, the optimal alignment of the communities in the northern parts of the Whitehorse City Local Government Area is with those in the Division of Menzies rather than in the Division of Deakin.

Chisholm

The Suggestions concerning the Division of Chisholm were broadly in agreement on the need of both the northern and southern boundaries of the Division to move south. The main issue with the northern boundary primarily focussed on how far south it would need to move, which is predominantly a product of what happens with the Divisions of Menzies and Deakin. With regard to the southern boundary, the issues primarily concerned which parts of the Monash City Local Government Area should be incorporated into the Division.

The Liberal Party maintains that the optimal northern boundary for the Division of Chisholm is along the Maroondah Highway/Whitehorse Road from Box Hill in the west to Nunawading in the east. It is a clear boundary that also distinguishes communities to its north and south along the criteria in section 66 of the Act. Some Suggestions that have used other roads or boundaries as the Division's northern boundary unnecessarily split communities and foster confusion among electors about which Division they live in.

Similarly, proposals to move the boundary between the Divisions of Chisholm and Kooyong from Warrigal Road to Elgar Road between Canterbury and Riversdale Roads in Surrey Hills, as a small number of Suggestions have proposed (see S13, S31, S34, S100, and S101), are unnecessary given that the Division of Kooyong already meets the actual and projected enrolment requirements and requires no changes to its boundaries (see S24, S43, S90, and S97).

The predominant view in the Suggestions for the southern boundary of the Division of Chisholm was for it to incorporate the parts of Mount Waverley and Glen Waverley that are not currently in the Division while also transferring Wheelers Hill into the Division to meet the numerical requirements (see S30, S31, S34, S70, S85, S90, and S97). This is the optimal alignment of communities in the Division of Chisholm as it ensures that Mount Waverley and Glen Waverley are able to be contained within one division while also ensuring that Wheelers Hill is not isolated from Glen Waverley with which it is interconnected.

It is worth noting that the nature and alignment of the communities within the Division of Chisholm have changed after the previous Redistribution. In gaining electors in Glen Waverley, the Division of Chisholm essentially became a division focused on the northern parts of the Monash City Local Government Area. For this reason, it is suboptimal to include areas in the south-west of the Monash City Local Government Area where it is possible to incorporate fragments of suburbs and better connected areas within the Division. Essentially, Oakleigh and Clayton North have weaker links to the areas north of the Monash Freeway than Wheelers Hill has to Glen Waverley.

It is necessary to point out the Australian Labor Party Suggestion (S100) for the Division of Chisholm as its proposed boundaries in both the north and south of the Division appear to have been concocted to achieve an outcome based on political interest rather than uniting communities within the Division. This is evidenced in particular by the choice of an inconsistent boundary in the south that incorporates various localities including Oakleigh and Clayton, while their proposed Division of Hotham doglegs into Bentleigh East and then comes all the way around to Wheelers Hill. The logic behind this suggested boundary is confused in the way it is drawn and as it is described by the Suggestion, where it says "The suburbs of Mulgrave and Wheelers Hill, which have never been in Higgins, are retained in Hotham." There is no consistency in this proposed boundary between the Divisions of Chisholm and Hotham and this has consequential negative impacts on the cohesiveness of the Division of Hotham in relation to the communities of interest and means of communication and travel criteria in section 66 of the Act that are avoidable.

Higgins and Macnamara

In the Suggestions, there are two main variations to the boundary between the Divisions of Higgins and Macnamara. One variation reversed the transfer of Windsor out of the Division of Higgins at the last Redistribution (see S13, S31, S43, S100, and S102). The other was realigning the boundary to create more compact divisions and reflect the north-south orientation of Caulfield and Caulfield North, and similarly in South Yarra, Prahran, and Windsor along Chapel Street (see S24, S34, S70, S90, S97, and S99).

The first variant does not address the long term issue that will eventually require the realignment as suggested in the second variation. As the paper 'Victoria small area population and enrolment projections' that accompanied the enrolment projections observed, "The projections don't account for future development and population growth that hasn't been observed in ABS population data (up to 30 June 2019). For example, the Victorian Government has a residential development plan for industrial parts of Port Melbourne (Fisherman's Bend)." The western part of the Division of Macnamara in and around Fisherman's Bend is likely to experience significant growth over the coming years, including during the projection period, which will put pressure on the Division of Macnamara to lose electors on its eastern end in Caulfield North.

There is an opportunity in this Redistribution to make the change that will enable easier transfers of electors between the Divisions of Higgins and Macnamara in future and better align the communities on the fringe of the Melbourne Central Business District in contrast to those communities in the less densely populated suburbs further east.

Additionally, there were Suggestions to transfer Hughesdale out of the Division of Higgins due to it being the only part of the Monash City Local Government Area in the Division (see S13, S31, S34, S100, S101, and S102). This may appear at first glance to be consistent with the communities of interest criteria purely from a Local Government Area boundary perspective, however, the previous Redistribution Committee correctly recognised the importance of Warrigal Road as a significant boundary in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne that is more important than a Local Government Area Boundary (see S24, S43, S70, S90, S97, and S99 that support this boundary). Hughesdale, as a community, is more interconnected with the communities to its west, Murrumbeena and Carnegie, than those to the east of Warrigal Road. Curiously, the Suggestions that proposed Poath Road as the boundary would be splitting a shopping precinct, as well as school and sporting club catchments. While Local Government Area boundaries generally provide a clear indication of communities of interest, Hughesdale is one of the few exceptions where there is a better alignment of communities, as was recognised by the previous Redistribution Committee for Victoria.

Isaacs, Goldstein, and Hotham

An area of contention in the various Suggestions concerns the distribution of electors in Bentleigh East. A number of Suggestions have attempted to address this issue by distributing Bentleigh East into either the Division of Isaacs (see S70 and S101) or by maintaining it in the Division of Hotham. At times, where Bentleigh East was suggested to remain in the Division of Hotham, it appears to have been so proposed as an afterthought or out a lack of consideration of its community links with the remaining parts of the proposed division (e.g. S100).

This Comment notes the Liberal Party's Suggestion (S90) for distributing Bentleigh East and restates that the division which these electors find themselves in has to be considered in terms of the optimal alignment of communities divisions. Additionally, it is worth noting that Bentleigh East is the only part of the Glen Eira



City Local Government area in the Division of Hotham and that its links to surrounding communities on its eastern and southern locality boundaries are also the weakest. For these reasons, the status quo and Suggestions that it be distributed into Isaacs are inadequate reflections of the communities of interest and interconnectivity of Bentleigh East with the surrounding suburbs. The Committee should sincerely consider where it distributes these electors.

Another issue that was raised in a number of Suggestion to varying degrees was distributing the Dandenong City Local Government Area out of the Division of Isaacs (see S70, S90, and S99). Such a change would assist in creating better alignment of the communities on the Local Government Areas of Dandenong City and Casey City within the Division of Bruce that will most likely be its focus after this Redistribution.

La Trobe, Holt, and Bruce

Given the significant growth in the south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne, in particular in the Casey City Local Government Area, it is expected that there would be a particular focus on this area in the various Suggestions.

As has been observed in a number of Suggestions, the significant growth, especially in the southern parts of the Casey City Local Government Area, poses some difficulty in distributing a Division of Holt that meets the required enrolment on actual and projected enrolments (see S13, S70, S85, S90, S100, and S101). However, as the Liberal Party's Suggestion (S90) shows, it is possible to maintain the existing eastern, southern, and western boundaries of the Division of Holt and only alter its northern boundary to meet the requirements of the Act. The change in the previous Redistribution to anchor the Division of Holt in and around Cranbourne, Cranbourne South, and Clyde was correct and any departure from this alignment of the Division of Holt with the southern parts of the Casey City Local Government Area would likely be reversed in future redistributions.

Suggestions that have been made that seek to alter these eastern, southern, and western boundaries of the Division of Holt varyingly ignore means of communication and travel, especially on the eastern boundary, and community of interests and inter-connectivity of communities, especially on the southern and western boundaries. The southern boundary of the Division of Holt is well-defined being Western Port and then the Local Government Area boundary between the Mornington Peninsula Shire and Casey City. Similarly, any changes to the eastern boundary cannot accommodate the high growth areas in Clyde and Clyde North in their entirety and, as some Suggestions have proposed (for example see S13 and S100), it would inevitably lead to these areas being connected via minor back roads into the Division of La Trobe. Clyde Road is the strongest boundary in the east for the Division of Holt and allows for the growth in the Casey City Local Government Area to be shared between the Divisions of Bruce, Holt, and La Trobe while respecting communities of interest and the means of communication and travel.

It is recognised that there is a difficulty in drawing clear boundaries through Narre Warren South, Lynbrook, and Hampton Park but there are alternative options that do not require ignoring the means of communication and travel in these communities.

Additionally, the Suggestions concerning the Division of La Trobe generally proposed that electors should be distributed from the Cardinia Shire Local Government Area to reduce the enrolment to the required level in the Division of Monash. It is noted that generally it was proposed to only do so in part and split the Local Government Area (see S85, S93, S99, S100, and S101), however, there were a number of Suggestions (see S6, S7, S8, S17, and S90), including from the Cardinia Shire (S7), which advocated against splitting the Local Government Area and incorporating it in the Division of La Trobe in its entirety. As the Liberal Party's Suggestion (S90) demonstrated, this is possible and it would best serve the interests in linking the whole Cardinia Shire in one division.



METROPOLITAN MELBOURNE – NORTH OF THE YARRA RIVER

New Division

Among the Suggestions, there is broad agreement that the New Division will be somewhere in and around Metropolitan Melbourne and to the north of the Yarra River (see S13, S24, S31, S43, S70, S85, S90, S93, S97, S99, S100, and S101). The location of the New Division has far reaching impacts on the boundaries of all Divisions in Victoria that are north of the Yarra River and north of the Great Dividing Range.

One view expressed in a number of Suggestions is that the New Division should straddle Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria to and in the west of Melbourne by joining Bacchus Marsh and Melton with communities in Gisborne and sometimes also including Sunbury (see S34, S43, S70, S85, S97 [note that this is referred to as the Division of Gorton in this Suggestion, but is essentially the same concept], S100, and S101). Creating the New Division in such a way not only causes a significant impact on the Division of Ballarat, most extremely illustrated in the Australian Labor Party's Suggestion (S100) of a division from Bannockburn to Daylesford via Ballarat while excluding Ballan and surrounding areas, but this has consequential impacts on surrounding divisions. This ultimately ends up with a Division of McEwen that also straddles the metropolitan and regional boundary, forcing it further into growth areas in Melbourne's north and creating a mixed division incorporating large swathes of central Victoria with the outer suburbs of Melbourne, in a way that has no coherent community of interest across the whole division.

Incorporating the growing suburbs of Wollert, Mernda, and Doreen with the relatively established suburbs of South Morang and Epping that interface with these new developments, and similarly Diamond Creek, which is experiencing new development on its urban fringe, with the remaining parts of Nillumbik that are not in the Division of Jagajaga and that orient towards Diamond Creek, presents a far more congruous division. The alternative has a Division of McEwen that spans from Kyneton or Lancefield to Kangaroo Ground and incorporates rural, peri-urban, established suburban, and new developments on the urban fringe without connecting socio-economic traits or communities of interest across the whole division. This can only be avoided if the north-east contains three whole divisions that do not contain parts of inner Melbourne.

Additionally, locating the New Division in inner Melbourne allows for maintaining the western boundary between Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria while also allowing for a clear interface division to the north of Melbourne that is predominantly regional and is balanced with electors from peri-urban and semi-rural parts of Metropolitan Local Government Areas without creating the need for a mixed regional/suburban division (see S90 and S93).

Gorton

While the importance of maintaining the existing western boundary of the Division of Gorton to prevent significant impacts on Regional Victoria has already been canvassed under the section 'New Division' and the nature of Bacchus Marsh under the section 'Ballarat' above, it is important to acknowledge that the Division of Gorton is based on the Melton City Local Government Area and the significance of the existing western boundary. In addition to this boundary also being the western boundary of the Melton City Local Government Area, it is a significant boundary between a Metropolitan City Local Government Area and a Rural Shire Local Government Area. The Bacchus Marsh-Melton boundary between Metropolitan and Regional Divisions is longstanding and there is no pressing need for it to be changed to address the criteria in section 66 of the Act.



CONCLUSION

The Liberal Party thanks the Redistribution Committee for Victoria for their consideration of both their Comments on Suggestions and their Suggestion. The Liberal Party looks forward to participating further in the process of the Federal Redistribution of Victoria and is prepared to provide any further information or clarification if the Committee requires.



ENDNOTES

- S6:** *Suggestion 6 - Berwick Netball Club*
- S7:** *Suggestion 7 - Cardinia Shire Council*
- S8:** *Suggestion 8 - Gumbuya World*
- S10:** *Suggestion 10 - Rex Niven*
- S13:** *Suggestion 13 - Jeff Waddell*
- S17:** *Suggestion 17 - Berwick Football Club*
- S19:** *Suggestion 19 - Betty Russell*
- S24:** *Suggestion 24 - Darren McSweeney*
- S28:** *Suggestion 28 - David Williams*
- S29:** *Suggestion 29 - Adrian Leenaerts*
- S30:** *Suggestion 30 - John Smith*
- S31:** *Suggestion 31 - David Liam Walsh*
- S34:** *Suggestion 34 - Dr Mark Mulcair*
- S43:** *Suggestion 43 - Dean Ashley*
- S70:** *Suggestion 70 - Charles Richardson LL.B, Ph.D*
- S85:** *Suggestion 85 - Colin McLaren*
- S87:** *Suggestion 87 - Alan Strangwick*
- S90:** *Suggestion 90 - Liberal Party of Australia (Victorian Division)*
- S93:** *Suggestion 93 - The Nationals*
- S97:** *Suggestion 97 - Australian Greens Victoria*
- S99:** *Suggestion 99 - Harry Hook*
- S100:** *Suggestion 100 - Australian Labor Party (Victorian Branch)*
- S101:** *Suggestion 101 - Justin Lamond*
- S102:** *Suggestion 102 - Andrew Norman*



2020-21 Redistribution of Victoria's Federal electoral boundaries

Comments on Suggestions to the Redistribution Committee for
Victoria by the **The Liberal Party of Australia** (Victorian Division)

30 October 2020

