



**THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Objection 506

Paul Heywood

2 pages

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Australian Electoral Commission
Locked Bag 4007,
Canberra ACT 2601

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Subject: Draft plans to abolish the federal seat of North Sydney
in the proposed 2024 NSW redistribution - Objection

Dear Commissioner,

I am writing to formally object to the proposed redistribution of the North Sydney electorate. Having lived in the electorate in Waverton for over 24 years I can testify that it is a vibrant and politically aware community. This has been demonstrated recently when the electorate was one of the first to put forward an independent candidate for the 2022 election and then vote them into office. The electorate is also one of the few to vote in favour of an Indigenous Voice to Parliament in the 2023 referendum and had the 3rd lowest percentage of informal votes of NSW electorates.

Population Growth

The LGAs covered by the North Sydney are undergoing substantial development, with numerous residential and commercial projects currently underway or planned for the near future. These developments are expected to drive significant population growth in the electorate. The Australian Bureau of Statistics projects that the population in the area will continue to increase at a steady rate, leading to higher density living and greater demands on local infrastructure and services.

An example that supports this is that the NSW State Government plans for 5,900 new homes to be built in the North Sydney LGA alone by 2029. If this growth is even partially replicated across the other three LGAs currently contained in the electorate that would see a substantial number of new homes, and associated number of electors in the community. In addition, North Sydney Council is expecting 19,500 new residents to move into the area by 2036, a 27% increase this LGA alone.

This contrasts significantly with the AEC's projected enrolments for 2028 of 112,566, which represents a loss of 64 electors. This is an unrealistic assumption as a population growth of just 15.09% would put the electorate on target to reach the assumed 2028 quota of 125,085 electors by that date.

Redistributing the electorate without accounting for any population growth risks creating imbalanced electorates that may fail to effectively represent the growing population and probably lead to the need to reestablish the electorate in the near future.

Demographic Differences

North Sydney is unique in its demographic composition, which sets it apart from neighbouring its electorates of Bennelong, Bradfield, and Warringah:

1. **Economic Status:** North Sydney is characterized by a high median income, with many residents employed in professional and managerial roles. This affluence contrasts with the more varied economic profiles of Bennelong, Bradfield, and Warringah, where there is a broader mix of incomes and occupations.
2. **Population Density and Urbanization:** The electorate of North Sydney is highly urbanized, featuring numerous high-rise apartments and commercial buildings. In contrast, Bradfield and parts of Bennelong have more suburban characteristics, with lower population densities and different urban planning needs.
3. **Age Distribution:** North Sydney has a higher proportion of young professionals and middle-aged residents, differing from the age distribution in adjacent electorates, where there may be more families with young children or a larger elderly population.
4. **North Sydney is a cohesive and engaged community:** North Sydney is home to numerous environmental, humanitarian, religious and social groups all working together the betterment of their community. We respect and value our cultural diversity, with half of our population born overseas and a third speaking a language other than English at home. We are also home to several active and competitive sports teams, including two of the largest community-based sporting organisations in the state.
5. **Historical Significance:** The historical significance of the federal seat of North Sydney is part of our community's identity. North Sydney is one of the 75 original federation divisions contested in Australia's first federal election 123 years ago.

These demographic distinctions are crucial for ensuring that the specific needs and interests of North Sydney residents are adequately represented. Merging North Sydney with adjacent electorates would dilute these unique characteristics and could lead to underrepresentation of the community's needs and priorities.

Conclusion

Given the projected population growth and the significant demographic differences between North Sydney and its neighbouring electorates, and I strongly oppose the draft proposal that the seat of North Sydney be abolished and request for it to remain intact. It is vital that the unique characteristics of the North Sydney electorate are preserved to ensure fair and effective representation for its residents.

Thank you for considering my objection.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Heywood