



**THE FEDERAL  
REDISTRIBUTION  
NEW SOUTH WALES**

# Objection 699

Prue Bardsley

2 pages

Dear Redistribution Committee,

I have resided in the Warringah electorate for over 40 years. Growing up I lived in the North Sydney electorate and have maintained close ties there. The democratic participation to elect a Community Independent in Warringah in 2019 and 2022 and in North Sydney in 2022 is unprecedented in my lifetime. The level of social and political activation, and resulting community connection and cohesion, cannot be overstated. At a time when democracy is under threat around the world, a well functioning democratic political system must be our first priority as a society. Warringah and North Sydney exemplify thriving democratically engaged communities.

It is against this backdrop that I register my objection to the draft proposal to abolish the seat of North Sydney and instead support:

Keeping the electorates of both Warringah and North Sydney

The objections to the draft redistribution proposal outlined by Zali Steggall MP and Kylea Tink MP

The proposed abolition of North Sydney fractures a cohesive and politically engaged community, undermining the extraordinary community participation that has resulted from the election of a Community Independent. Kylea Tink MP, like other Community Independents, has a two-way compact with her community. She works with her community and her community is working with her, a two-way relationship that strengthens our democracy. This compact is torn asunder by the proposed abolition and is deeply felt by the community. Abolishing a seat held by a community independent is very different to abolishing a party held seat, the local community is genuinely grieving.

An equally extraordinary level of local engagement with democracy resulted in the election of Zali Steggall in 2019 and her re-election with an even larger margin in 2022. The strength of this engagement has led to many social, environmental and humanitarian initiatives. Thousands of volunteers in both electorates work tirelessly to support their independent MPs. They have a strong community pride in their electorate. Many were new to politics and only became engaged because Community Independents do politics differently, genuinely representing and collaborating with their communities. For the first time, people felt part of their electorate community. These electorates are so much more than mere boundaries - they encompass diverse communities of all ages, united by common values, who came together to elect strong female Community Independents.

I have been a part of and witnessed this democratic revival first hand and ask the committee to consider options that preserve both the electorates of North Sydney and Warringah. I appreciate the complexity of the task before the Committee, however there are 24 NSW seats under quota and given the exceptional civic engagement and social cohesion of North Sydney and Warringah, I urge the committee to consider other alternatives.

The enormity of what has been achieved in Warringah and North Sydney, the extent of social cohesion, civic engagement and democratic participation, is too precious to tear apart.

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