



**THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Suggestion 44

Allegra Spender MP

4 pages



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FEDERAL MEMBER FOR WENTWORTH

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The Redistribution Committee for New South Wales
Australian Electoral Commission
Level 13, 59-61 Goulbourn St
Haymarket, Sydney, NSW, 2000

By email: FedRedistribution-NSW@aec.gov.au

RE: NEW SOUTH WALES (NSW) FEDERAL REDISTRIBUTION

Dear Redistribution Committee,

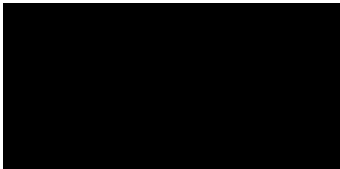
I am writing to you regarding the federal redistribution of electorates in NSW, specifically in relation to the boundaries of the Division of Wentworth. I have lived in Wentworth almost my entire life and it has been an honour and a privilege to represent this community in federal parliament since May 2022.

Wentworth was one of the original 65 divisions contested at the very first federal election in 1900. Bounded by Sydney Harbour to the north and the Pacific Ocean to the east, Wentworth currently shares an electoral boundary with the Divisions of Sydney (to the west) and Kingsford-Smith (to the south). It fully encompasses the local government areas of Waverley and Woollahra, and partially encompasses those of the City of Sydney and Randwick. Wentworth is home to some of Australia's most iconic locations – including Bondi Beach, Watsons Bay, and Centennial Park – and has a diverse community, including the nation's largest Jewish population. Over the years, Wentworth has had a number of illustrious representatives, including former Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and former Opposition Leader John Hewson.

This submission sets out my observations regarding future changes to Wentworth's electoral boundaries, which will be needed to meet the revised quotas determined through the redistribution process. Based on the provisions in the *Electoral Act*, the most compelling logic exists for an expansion of Wentworth's western boundary to encompass the suburbs of Potts Point, Woolloomooloo, and Surry Hills, as well as Darlinghurst and Kings Cross (which are already partially inside the electorate). There is also justification for some expansion southwards, specifically to bring the suburb of Clovelly fully into the electorate. Overall, these changes would bring the revised Division of Wentworth closer into line with the boundaries drawn between 2006 and 2016.

I trust the information on the follow pages is of assistance in your deliberations, and I remain available should you wish to discuss this with me in more detail.

Kind regards,



Allegra Spender MP
Independent Member for Wentworth



Allegra Spender MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR WENTWORTH

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT.

As announced earlier this year, the AEC's federal redistribution will see the overall number of seats in the House of Representatives decrease by one, and the number of electorates in NSW also decrease by one. Based on actual enrolment numbers as of 9th August 2023, the 46-seat quota for NSW has therefore increased to 121,011, with a permissible range of 108,910 to 133,112 (+/- 10%).¹ Looking forward, the projected enrolment quota for 10th April 2028 is 129,621, with all NSW electorates required to have projected enrolment between 125,085 and 134,157.²

Under the current boundaries, Wentworth has 104,081 electors. This means it is 16,930 electors (14%) short of the current 46-seat quota of 121,011. The AEC has projected that the number of electors in Wentworth will fall by 1.63% by 2028, meaning Wentworth's projected enrolment is estimated to be 102,383. This leaves Wentworth 27,238 electors short of the projected quota for 2028 and 22,702 electors short of the permissible minimum number of electors (projected quota minus 3.5%).³

Given the geography of the Pacific Ocean to the east and Sydney Harbour to the north, there need always be an electorate in Sydney's eastern suburbs that encompasses this coastline. To ensure alignment with the revised quotas, the only viable option is therefore for Wentworth to increase in size as part of the redistribution. The practical ways to do so are to expand Wentworth to the west or to the south (since to cross the waters of Sydney Harbour or the Pacific Ocean would run contrary to the provisions in the *Electoral Act*). Both of these feasible options are examined below.

EXPANDING WEST.

The most logical expansion of the Wentworth electorate is to the west, such that the new boundaries more closely reflect those drawn between 2006 and 2016. Such a change would have strong precedent, given the AEC's previous redistribution decisions in eastern Sydney.

For example, the western boundary of the electorate could run north-to-south from Mrs Macquarie's Road, alongside Art Gallery Road, College Street, Elizabeth Street and Chalmers Street, with an accompanying extension of south-western boundary along Cleveland Street. This would bring the suburbs of Potts Point, Woolloomooloo, and Surry Hills into Wentworth, as well as Darlinghurst and Kings Cross (which are already partially inside the electorate).

Such an expansion makes sense numerically and geographically.

Bringing these additional suburbs would add around 26,000 projected enrolments to Wentworth, leaving the electorate above the 2028 permissible minimum (~3,000 above) and close to the projected quota (~1,600 below). A similar number of actual enrolments as of August 2023 would also be added.⁴

Geographically, a reversion to more closely reflect the 2006-2016 boundaries around Hyde Park would create a clear delineation in the north-west between the Central Business District (to Hyde Park's west) – which would fall within the Sydney electorate – and the eastern suburbs, which would fall within Wentworth. In the south-west, Central Station and the accompanying railway line would provide natural delineation between Wentworth and Sydney. The south-western boundary could be extended

¹ AEC.gov.au (October 2023), Redistribution quota – New South Wales federal redistribution

² AEC.gov.au (October 2023), Enrolment projections - New South Wales federal redistribution

³ AEC.gov.au (October 2023), Enrolment projections - New South Wales federal redistribution

⁴ AEC.gov.au (October 2023), Enrolment projections - New South Wales federal redistribution



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along the M1 to Dacey Avenue should the complete incorporation of Moore Park into Wentworth be desirable from the perspective of geographical consistency.

Expanding Wentworth's western boundary to the edge of the CBD would also bring culturally similar communities together. Whilst Elizabeth Bay and Potts Point are essentially the same community, they currently fall into two different electorates (Wentworth and Sydney). The communities of Kings Cross and Darlinghurst are similarly divided. Expanding the Wentworth boundary west would bring these communities into the same electorate as each other, as well as with culturally similar areas. Indeed, the communities of Potts Point, Darlinghurst, Surry Hills and Woolloomooloo have much more in common with Kings Cross, Elizabeth Bay, and Paddington, than they do with the Central Business District, or with other suburbs in the current Sydney electorate like Chippendale or Alexandria.

All other things equal, moving the Wentworth boundary west would reduce the number of electors in the Sydney seat (which is currently above quota but projected to slip slightly below by 2028).⁵ However, Sydney would retain the ability to recoup these electors via its own expansion west, whilst retaining the characteristics of a "capital city" seat (e.g. central business district, major train stations, landmarks and educational institutions).

EXPANDING SOUTH.

There is also the option for Wentworth to expand South. This would likely involve shifting the boundary from King Street / Clovelly Road down to Alison Road, which would be consistent with a western expansion that incorporates Surry Hills.

Currently, the suburbs of Clovelly and North Randwick are split between Wentworth and Kingsford-Smith (along Clovelly Road), and a boundary along Alison Road would bring them both more fully into Wentworth. The communities of interest argument here is particularly strong for Clovelly, which shares strong ties with Bronte and Waverley.

The impact of such a change would increase the number of electors in Wentworth, but is alone insufficient to meet expected quota requirements. In 2028, there are projected to be 5,746 electors in the parts of Randwick North which currently fall within Kingsford-Smith, and 10,815 electors in the parts of Clovelly which currently fall within Kingsford-Smith.⁶ Incorporating both of these split suburbs into Wentworth would therefore increase the projected number of electors in Wentworth by around 16,500. This is short of the 22,700 required to make-up the minimum permissible number in 2028. Such a change would therefore need to be paired with an expanded western boundary.

An alternative to this would be to expand Wentworth's boundary further south to Coogee Bay Road. However, the logic for such a change is not as compelling. This would bring additional parts of Randwick into the Wentworth electorate, as well as the northern half of Coogee. Such a change would effectively split Coogee between Wentworth and Kingsford-Smith. The Wentworth seat has not expanded this far south in recent memory.

Whilst Kingsford-Smith is currently below the 46-seat quota and 2028 projected quota, there is a strong case for not expanding its own boundary north (into the current Wentworth seat). Doing so

⁵ Sydney has 122,549 electors as per August 2023 vs. quota of 121,011; and 121,661 projected enrolments estimated at April 2028 vs. permissible minimum projected number of electors of 125,085.

⁶ AEC.gov.au (October 2023), Enrolment projections - New South Wales federal redistribution



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would likely result in Moriah War Memorial College and Emanuel School – two Jewish day schools – falling inside Kingsford-Smith. Wentworth has the highest Jewish population of any electorate in the country and most of the families whose children attend Moriah and Emanuel live in Wentworth, in particular in Rose Bay, Double Bay, and Vaucluse. In keeping with this, there are numerous synagogues located in Wentworth, for example Emanuel Synagogue (Woollahra), Central Synagogue (Bondi Junction), and Dover Heights Shule (Dover Heights) – to name just a few.

To move one or both of these schools into the Kingsford-Smith electorate would therefore run contrary to keeping communities of interest and means of communication and travel within proposed districts. This issue was examined in the 2006 redistribution, with both schools remaining in Wentworth due to the aforementioned factors.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

The AEC's redistribution is an important step in maintaining the integrity of our electoral system by ensuring equality of representation in the federal parliament. The Division of Wentworth has existed since the very first federal election, but there is a clear need to expand its size to more closely align with the revised NSW quota. An expansion to the west, with maintained or slightly expanded boundaries to the south, has the most compelling rationale from the perspective of keeping communities of interest together. I trust this information is helpful to your deliberations.