



# Objection 127

Anonymous 11

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## **Objection to the abolition of the seat of Higgins**

I am a relatively new elector in the seat of Higgins, however I have come to understand that this seat has a crucial identity to the area of Stonnington and would be very sad to see it go simply on the basis of some numbers.

We have a local member, currently Dr Ananda-Rajah, ALP, previously Dr Allen, Liberal, representing two sides of the political spectrum showing that our seat is robust, strong and diverse, capable of showing that it can withstand change in politics. We are not a uniform seat that always votes the same way every election like some others neighbouring us. Our seat is rich in that way.

Higgins is the seat of Stonnington. Just as Kooyong is very much the seat of Boorondara, just as Goldstein is the seat of Bayside and Macnamara the seat of Port Phillip. There is a crucial identity crisis then facing Stonnington residents if the seat of Higgins is abolished purely on these abstract numerical grounds. Where I live, we will be simply 'consumed' by Kooyong. We don't share their character. We will lose all sense of our identity as a seat federally and become more of an appendage to what is the 'seat of Boroondara'. In short, we won't actually have a seat and therefore we genuinely risk not having effective representation who really know us for who we really are.

So then it becomes what do we do about the 39<sup>th</sup> seat.

To me the answer is quite simple, consolidate the seats away from Melbourne where the future population growth will not be as strong – i.e. find the seat to consolidate in regional Victoria – which may mean moving boundaries around to realign existing seats to adjust the numbers there. But in terms of Higgins and inner east Melbourne more generally, population will pick up and Melbourne will grow. My home is literally surrounded by new apartment developments everywhere I look. Melbourne will surpass Sydney's population, if it has not already, and we will have more and more urban infill increasingly throughout all parts of Melbourne, including Higgins. But to squander the very identity of an entire electorate of 120,000 people for the sake of some numerical balancing act without reference to neighbourhood identity and what makes our streets and gardens tick is just very sad.

I will conserve my efforts and not write any further contribution at this time, as I understand that the committee has most likely made its mind up already to abolish the seat of Higgins already so there is no point. But I had to in conscience submit my objection.