



Objection 167

Jo McLean

2 pages

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of [REDACTED]

Sent: Sunday, 23 June 2024 3:30 PM

To: FedRedistribution - VIC

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Higgins redistribution objection

Categories: [REDACTED]

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Subject: Urgent Appeal Against the Abolition of the Federal Electoral Seat of Higgins

Dear Australian Electoral Commission,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Jo McLean, and I am writing to you from my home at [REDACTED], South Yarra, with a matter of great importance to the residents of Higgins and, more specifically, to the vibrant community of Stonnington.

The proposal to abolish the federal electoral seat of Higgins as part of the redistribution to balance electoral representation is a decision that has caused considerable concern among my neighbours and me. As a community, we feel compelled to voice our strong objection to this proposed change, and I wish to elucidate the reasons for our disquiet in a manner reminiscent of the inimitable style of the late, great Australian journalist, Peter Harvey.

Firstly, the abolition of Higgins will undeniably dilute the voice of its residents. Higgins has long been a bastion of political engagement, with its constituents actively participating in the democratic process. The merger into neighbouring electorates such as Chisholm, Hotham, Kooyong, Macnamara, and Melbourne threatens to scatter our collective influence, rendering our voices less potent in the corridors of federal power. The unique needs and aspirations of Stonnington, a community with its distinct identity, risk being overshadowed by the broader, and often differing, priorities of these neighbouring electorates.

Moreover, the community identity of Higgins is not merely a geographical construct but a tapestry woven with threads of shared history, values, and experiences. From the bustling streets of South Yarra to the serene parks of Malvern, Higgins is a microcosm of Melbourne's rich cultural mosaic. The proposed abolition would disrupt this tapestry, splitting our communities and absorbing them into electorates that may not fully appreciate or prioritise our unique character and needs. The sense of belonging and continuity that we cherish in Higgins would be irreparably fractured.

The established relationships between Higgins residents and our current Member of Parliament are another critical consideration. These relationships are not built overnight but are the result of years of trust, advocacy, and service. The proposed changes would sever these connections, leading to potential disruptions in services and advocacy efforts that are tailored to our community's specific needs. This disruption could have tangible negative impacts on the lives of Higgins residents, particularly those who rely on their MP for support and representation.

Electoral confusion is another inevitable consequence of this proposed abolition. Voters would be thrust into a state of uncertainty regarding their new electorates, polling places, and representatives. This confusion could lead to decreased voter engagement and participation, undermining the very democratic principles that the AEC seeks to uphold.

Lastly, the impact on local projects and initiatives cannot be overstated. Higgins has numerous ongoing projects that are vital to the community's wellbeing and development. The introduction of new representatives unfamiliar with these initiatives could result in a loss of momentum or deprioritisation, to the detriment of the community.

In conclusion, I earnestly request that the Australian Electoral Commission reconsider the decision to abolish the federal electoral seat of Higgins. The preservation of our electoral structure is not merely a matter of administrative convenience but one of profound significance to the residents of Higgins. Our community's voice, identity, and continuity depend on it.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust that the AEC will give due consideration to the concerns of Higgins residents and act in the best interests of our community.

Yours sincerely,

Jo McLean

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