



Objection 228

Zeinab Hosseini

2 pages

Dear Committee,

I write to you in relation to the proposed boundaries of the Federal Electorate of Wills, as per the proposed redistribution report released on 31 May 2024.

I strongly oppose the removal of parts of Oak Park, Pascoe Vale, Brunswick West and Glenroy from our electorate. I have lived in Wills for over 30 years, most of this in Pascoe Vale. I have forged strong ties with the community and feel connected to my neighbours in Oak Park and Glenroy.

There are many reasons for this opposition – I will outline some of these below:

Oak Park, Pascoe Vale and Glenroy have always been a part of Merri-Bek council. I previously lived in Coburg, then moved with my family to Pascoe Vale. I have been part of the same LGA during this entire period, and it has made it much easier to access continued services via the same council. This is particularly important in ensuring services are culturally competent and meet the needs of local community groups.

As a family services practitioner at a local NGO, an important part of my role is in delivering culturally competent services to the communities we serve. As part of roles such as mine it is important to become familiar with the communities you serve – breaking up culturally similar communities who live across Oak Park and Glenroy (ie. splitting these suburbs into two LGAs and electorates) will make it challenging for local service providers to tailor services specific to the communities they service. It will also disrupt the social cohesion, harmony and sense of connection communities have developed within these suburbs.

As a proud Muslim woman, I feel strongly connected to our multicultural communities in Wills. Dividing our cultural and linguistic diversity, and splitting communities off from one another into two electorates will diminish the growth of these groups as communities of interests that have formed within Wills. As cultural and linguistically diverse groups have grown and 'found their place' in our local suburbs, we cannot allow this decision to lead to isolation of community members, which will have a significant impact on their sense of connection as well as their ability to make representations to local, state and federal governments.

From a natural boundaries perspective, part of the border between the electorate of Wills and the electoral Division of Melbourne, which runs along Park Street and up Lygon street acts as a suitable and recognisable border, separating the two divisions. This should continue being the way.

My son plays for the Pascoe Vale Soccer Club – many of the players, supporters and club members include people from various cultural backgrounds who reside in the neighbouring suburbs of Pascoe Vale, Oak Park and Glenroy. Removing any part of Oak Park and Glenroy, and by extension some of the sporting clubs in Wills, will sever the collective interests of sporting Clubs in the local area, and their ability to have a unified voice in seeking funding and supports from their local council or

Federal member of parliament. I am concerned for other local sporting clubs who will also be severely disadvantaged by this proposed redistribution.

The changes being proposed by the AEC to Wills will not support the interests of our community, or support the community harmony that exists, within such multicultural suburbs and electorates. I ask that the changes be rejected.

Thank you for your consideration of my submission.

Kind regards,

Zeinab Hosseini