



Objection 458

Jarrold

1 page

Introduction

First of all, I would like to thank the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) for this valuable opportunity to submit any objections to the proposed Victorian redistribution. This stage ensures the AEC considers the views and concerns of the community to proposed changes to electoral boundaries that often have profound impacts on the communities impacted.

A Concave Dilemma: McEwen

This objection will seek to focus on the seat of McEwen and surrounds, in recent decades, the seat, once a bastion of electoral coherence, now grapples with a disconcerting concavity. This has made it exceptionally difficult for the AEC to ensure communities of interests are retained.

The Mernda Paradox: A Tale of Two Halves

The proposed redistribution, and indeed the present state of the seat, has made Mernda an area for concern. Along the Cravens Road and Bridge Inn Road boundary, Mernda bifurcates—its halves, South Mernda and Mernda South, severed. Yet, these halves share arterial roads, essential services, commercial precincts, community groups, etc. To query a denizen of Mernda North on their distinctiveness from a counterpart in Mernda South would yield naught but perplexed glances and stares. Mernda, like Humpty Dumpty, teeters on the precipice of division. Its halves yearn for reunification. Yet, the cartographer's pen, wielded with bureaucratic solemnity, tears them apart.

This begs a greater question, why, on the AECs watch, has the commission allowed so many SA2s to be broken up through supposed lines of demarcation that have no standing other than that of the AEC running out of ideas. Likewise, why, presently has the proposal broken up the LGA of the City of Whittlesea, given they, as explained further, are dependent on the same services. This is, if I may argue, perhaps a symptom of the boundaries deviating from the historical precedent of Mernda being a part of McEwen in its entirety.

Recently, we saw good hearty commonsense prevail from the thinkers of the Victorian Electoral commission prevail, the splitting up of Diamond Creek and then the later reunification of Diamond Creek sets a precedent for the ability for electoral commissions to unite rather than divide.

The Need For A Solution

The method by which this is achieved is unclear; however, the need is paramount. Many of the suggestions proposed during earlier stages of consultation, such as that of CS39, seem to fit well with this proposal, given they had proposed similar changes (albeit to a greater extent). These changes will remain in the quota for projected voters provided by the AEC. These proposed adjustments will help ensure that the AEC meets its statutory obligations in the district through simple and easy changes. I again thank the commission for this valuable opportunity.

Thank you.