



# Objection 474

Margaret Harrison

2 pages

## AEC OBJECTION TO HIGGINS DISTRIBUTION

- Our community will be split, as will important issues we face together such as transport, health, economic issues, sporting and cultural ties. Our shopping centres and strip shopping areas are important to us as community members and need to remain in Higgins.
- Stonnington is a unique and vibrant community and to lose our representation at Federal level would mean less people fighting for the things our community needs. Splitting Stonnington 5 ways is divisive at a time when our country is already too divided. We need a Member who lives in Stonnington/Higgins and knows our needs.
- Cabrini hospital belongs to Stonnington and is an important centre for our health issues, for our aged residents, and for new babies and parents.
- The seat of Higgins has significant historical importance, having been held by 2 previous Prime Ministers and the longest serving Treasurer, and a Minister for Women who made this Ministry significant in Government.
- Higgins was named after Justice Henry Higgins who, in 1907, introduced a *fair and reasonable wage* to be 7 shillings a day for a labourer. That judgement formed the basis of the basic and minimum wage measures which are shared by all Australians to this day. This historical significance must be respected, and the name not obliterated.
- The number of electors in Higgins can be expected to grow strongly based on the surge in residential building construction as approvals for the densification are translated in to completed buildings. For Stonnington Council alone the population is expected to be 125,500 in 2028 and 137,725 in 2036, based on the Council's projections. It is noteworthy, that most new dwellings are for two-bedroom accommodation with an average occupancy ratio of slightly over 2 persons meaning a high ratio of electors to residents.  
The Electorate of Higgins has a long history of established community connections and networks and is proud of its history. The fragmentation of Higgins into minority components of Electorates with different characteristics will be viewed as a very negative development by Higgins Electors.
- The decisions being made by the Australian Electoral Commission on redistribution are based on highly contestable estimates and projections related to events of a temporary nature. It would be more prudent for the Commission to wait and see if these projections are correct and enduring before making such significant disruptive changes.

The electorate of Higgins is long established, with very close relationships among its electors. They are differentiated from the electorates around it. The fragmentation proposed by the Commission will mean that many electors will be enrolled in Electorates where they do not share that common bond.