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Submission OB48

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Campbell, Peter - Redistribution TAS - Submission on the proposed Tasmanian redistribution

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Submission on the proposed Tasmanian redistribution details

Category: Names
Details: Good day.

With regards to the electoral redistribution of Tasmania I have the following concerns, mainly with the fact that the electorates will not be truly representative.

1) Regarding the short on <https://www.aec.gov.au/redistributions/2024/tas/proposed-redistribution/index.html> stating that Tasmania really only deserves 3 electorates but has 5 due to being one of the founding states - that may be technically true, but it ignores the fact that for the majority of Federation electorates were substantially smaller, population-wise. There was an expansion (Australia-wide) from 74 to 121 seats in 1949, dropping the electorate size from around 64000 to 40000, then in 1984 from 125 to 148, reducing the size from 75000 to 65000. We are now sitting at an electorate size of 120000 - this is a ridiculously high number compared to other democratic nations, such as New Zealand who have about 30000 per electorate. Tasmania should really have 6-7 electorates, based on historical numbers, and would have 14 if we were part of New Zealand.

The fact that we have such a high number of voters (and people) per electorate means that our electorates can NOT be truly representative - there is no way that the elected officials can cater to such a high number of diverse constituents, and this also means that hardly anyone in the electorate gets to meet their elected representative to raise issues - there just isn't time for them.

It is clear that this major problem is NOT going to be solved with shuffling of the deckchairs; the

redistribution should be put on hold until the more serious issue of ensuring that there is an increase in the number of electorates is addressed.

2) The redistribution is predominantly considering population. This is understandable, given that it is the easiest metric to base the decision on. This is resulting in electorates that have a large urban population centre with a small geographical area combined with a small semi-rural/rural population with a large geographical area. Sounds nice on paper, but that is, once again, not truly representative. The wishes of the large urban population will nearly always outweigh the wishes of the small semi-rural/rural population in the minds of the elected officials, purely on a numbers basis. Whilst obviously not intentional, this is very much in-line with what is happening in the USA with their massive gerrymandering problem; not so much favouring a particular party in this case, but definitely favouring a particular group of people (urban) over a less-advantaged group (semi-rural/rural).

That is why it is better to have electorates that are chosen based on other elements besides pure population - in Tasmania we should have some dedicated urban electorates and dedicated semi-rural/rural electorates as their access to services and requirements are often quite different. On this basis you'd be better off keeping Clark mostly as is, but moving Eastern Hobart out of Franklin and into it.

3) If you ignore the above and decide to go ahead with the increasingly unrepresentative electorates, then at the very least you need to change the names. Given the history of the Franklin electorate moving most of it, geographically speaking, to the North-East is ridiculous. Given Clark is a relatively recent invention the much more sensible decision would be to keep the name Franklin in the electorate covering the Huon Valley and surrounds, and instead have Clark be the name for what is currently planned to be called Franklin.

Otherwise rather than moving the name to a totally different area it should be retired altogether and a new name chosen.

Given that the name of the original caretakers of the island have yet to make an appearance I would suggest it is high-time that a Palawa or palawa kani name be used for the next new electorate. For example, if you retire "Franklin" then perhaps "Mathinna" is a suitable choice, given her association with the individual the Franklin electorate was named after, which would also introduce many people to some of the history of our island. Other potential names could be Tongerlongeter (or Tarenorerer, more for the history than the geography), or one of the mobs who lived in what will become the new electorate like the Mumirimina being an obvious choice, or perhaps one of the areas covered by the new electorate, e.g. puthimiluna, trayapana or tipina.

Thank you.
