



THE FEDERAL  
REDISTRIBUTION  
TASMANIA

# Submission OB74

Brian Miller

# **THERE ARE MUCH LESS DISRUPTIVE WAYS TO BALANCE OUR ELECTORATES THAN THE PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGES**

## **THE PROPOSED REDISTRIBUTION THREATENS TO TEAR APART COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS BY MOVING BRIGHTON AND GLENORCHY, WRITES LEIGH GRAY**

The proposed changes to Tasmania's electoral boundaries would mean big changes for two important southern population centres.

The Australian Electoral Commission's draft redistribution moves Brighton – from the electorate of Lyons to Franklin – and dramatically proposes moving Glenorchy – from the urban electorate of Clark into the rural and regional electorate of Lyons.

While the AEC needs to maintain relatively even populations within each of our five electorates, it is also important to respect community interests and minimise major disruptions.

In simple terms, Lyons has become too large and Clark too small. Brighton's growth has been a major contributor to the rapid population growth within Lyons, along with Sorell and Meander Valley.

However, Brighton's identity remains closely connected to its rural and regional history. Brighton is a hub for its subregions of Southern Midlands and Central Highlands and is where many from those communities come for education, employment, shopping, medical services and sport. Indeed, we often undertake joint actions and programs, such as our Southcentral Jobs Hub and sub-regional infrastructure planning. Disrupting that collaboration now would potentially undo a lot of good work.

While our community is in part a key growth area of Greater Hobart, it plays an equally significant role as a rural-regional hub, servicing the rural interior regions of Southern Midlands and Central Highlands. This important role will be completely diminished if Brighton was to become part of Franklin – we would be

electorally disconnected from the communities that interact with and depend on us.

We agree with Glenorchy Mayor Sue Hickey – in that Glenorchy belongs in an urban community that is clearly part of Greater Hobart and should therefore remain in Clark. It seems crazy that a city municipality, such as Glenorchy, should form more than half the population of a largely rural electorate like Lyons – that stretches as far as Binalong Bay – at the opposite end of Tasmania!

Glenorchy is a major urban municipality that forms part of the continuous metropolitan area of Hobart. Residents move freely between Glenorchy, Hobart and the Northern suburbs every day for work, education, services and recreation. Not to mention the broad range of projects and programs that Glenorchy and Hobart work together on, including one of the most important and consequential city-building and urban renewal projects Greater Hobart will likely see for decades to come: the Northern Suburbs Transit Corridor project.

The Commonwealth Electoral Act requires redistributions to consider communities of interest, communication links and travel patterns – not just numerical quotas.

It seems odd that the AEC would consider such a disruptive redistribution, impacting almost a third of Tasmanian voters, when there are far less unsettling ways to balance the numbers. Switching the Derwent Valley from Lyons to Clark is one way to help balance the numbers. The bulk of Derwent Valley's population, around New Norfolk, has a strong systemic and structural connection with Glenorchy. New Norfolk interacts with Glenorchy in a similar way to the Southern Midlands and Central Highlands interaction with Brighton.

Brighton has long been part of Lyons, and that electorate reflects our community interest. Our municipality sits at the gateway between metropolitan Hobart and regional Tasmania. Our economic links stretch up the Midlands and into the rural and regional communities that make up much of Lyons. Many of the policy challenges we share – freight movement, regional growth, agricultural supply chains, and peri-urban growth challenges for example – are the same issues faced by other communities in Lyons, such as Meander and Sorell. Contrary to the aim of strengthening representation for communities of interest, the proposed redistribution dilutes the voice of rural and regional Tasmanians.

From Brighton's perspective, three things are clear: Brighton belongs in Lyons, Glenorchy belongs in Clark, and there are far less disruptive ways to balance our electorates.

We accept that the boundaries need to change, but what's on the table goes way too far.

**Leigh Gray is the Mayor of Brighton**

requirement to preserve genuine communities of interest and travel patterns where practicable. Put bluntly, Glenorchy should not be used as a balancing instrument to fix Lyons' geometry.

There is a practical, lower-disruption alternative. Council has proposed keeping Glenorchy wholly within Clark and instead transferring Derwent Valley from Lyons to Clark, an indicative transfer of about 8281 electors at commencement figures. This directly addresses the Clark/Lyons numerical imbalance while better respecting communities of interest and minimising disruption.

If the commission's priority is resolving Franklin's non-contiguity, council has also outlined an approach in a detailed submission that achieves contiguity without moving Glenorchy. The point is not to deny the arithmetic; it is to meet it in a way that keeps Greater Hobart's metropolitan fabric in tact.

Finally, process matters. A proposal of this magnitude shifting an entire metropolitan municipality out of its natural electorate should be tested through direct, place-based engagement with affected communities and councils.

From Glenorchy's perspective, there appears to have been limited direct consultation on the local impacts of this proposal before it was released. That weakens confidence that the commission has fully weighed lived travel patterns, shared service catchments and the practical work already underway to connect our cities.

Glenorchy belongs in Clark because that is where our community of interest lies economically, socially, and through daily travel and communication. The AEC can meet quota requirements without a high-disruption solution that splits Greater Hobart's metropolitan coherence. It should choose the lower-disruption path, keep Glenorchy in Clark, and draw boundaries that reflect how Tasmanians actually live.

**Sue Hickey is the Mayor of Glenorchy**

# THERE'S A BETTER WAY TO FIX ELECTORATES THAN PUTTING A METRO AREA INTO A RURAL ZONE

The Australian Electoral Commission's draft proposal to move Glenorchy from Clark into Lyons might look tidy on a map, but it doesn't reflect the way Greater Hobart actually functions day-to-day.

Glenorchy is a major metropolitan municipality in a continuous urban area. Our residents' jobs, services and travel patterns are overwhelmingly linked to Hobart and the northern suburbs. That metropolitan reality matters, because the law requires more than just "getting the numbers right".

Yes, "one vote, one value" is fundamental. Glenorchy City Council accepts that redistributions must meet quotas at commencement and, as far as practicable, projected quotas into the future. But the Commonwealth Electoral Act also requires the commission to consider communities of interest, means of communication and travel, physical features and boundary stability. Those aren't optional extras, they exist to ensure electorates make sense in the real world.

The draft plan is also an unusually high-disruption option. It would move 113,884 electors (27.56 per cent of Tasmanian electors) into different electorates. That scale of change should be reserved for circumstances where no lower-disruption, quota-compliant alternative exists. In Glenorchy's case, there is.

Start with the evidence of community of interest. ABS Census 2021 Journey to Work data shows 59.5 per cent of employed Glenorchy residents work outside our municipality, and Hobart is the largest workplace destination 9271 people, or 39.3 per cent. These are metropolitan commuting patterns aligned to Hobart's CBD and the northern suburbs corridor.

Moving Glenorchy into a predominantly regional electorate risks weakening representational coherence for a community whose daily life is shaped by metropolitan issues: urban renewal, housing supply, congestion and city-scale services.

This isn't abstract. Glenorchy and Hobart City Council are working together on city-shaping transport initiatives that assume, correctly, that our communities are part of one integrated urban system. One is the proposed northern suburbs transit corridor using the unused rail corridor to connect Glenorchy and Hobart through light rail or rapid bus transit, to generate increased housing density along the corridor. Another is the Derwent River ferry service linking our cities, with development applications now being lodged and the project funded by the Australian government. These projects make no sense if Glenorchy is treated as separate from metropolitan Hobart.

So why move Glenorchy? The draft proposal suggests part of the motivation is to give Lyons an "urban centre". That may be a design preference, but it should not override the statutory

TO AUSTRALIAN ELECTOPAL COMMISSION

17<sup>th</sup>. March 2026

RE DRAFT PROPOSAL TASMANIAN ELECTORATES

FROM Brian Miller

[REDACTED]

I have attached copies of statements by Glenorchy and Brighton mayors Sue Hickey and Leigh Gray which appeared in the the Mercury newspaper respectively on the 7<sup>th</sup>. and 17<sup>th</sup>. of March 2026.

I agree with everything they say about the draft proposal and in particular the items I have highlighted.

I also strongly agree that moving Derwent Valley from Lyons to Clark is a far better option.

[REDACTED]

Brian Miller