



THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
QUEENSLAND

Submission CS33

Dr Mark Mulcair

COMMENTS ON SUGGESTIONS FOR THE 2026 QUEENSLAND FEDERAL REDISTRIBUTION

(Dr Mark Mulcair)

Areas of agreement

There are some significant differences between the Suggestions, but they tend to be in specific parts of the state – the Burnett Region, Logan LGA, the Lockyer Valley, and throughout northern Brisbane. These are the areas that tend to be the interface for changes elsewhere, and it is clear that there are many different ideas of how to manage this.

Elsewhere however, there is actually a lot of agreement between the submissions. Almost every suggestion proposes to:

- Transfer northern semi-rural parts of Townsville to Kennedy – many submissions also agree to place southern areas around Wulguru into Kennedy as well.
- Unite the remaining urban parts of Townsville in Herbert.
- Unite all or most of Mackay and Whitsunday LGAs in Dawson.
- Unite all of Rockhampton LGA in Capricornia.
- Place Maryborough in the same Division as Hervey Bay.
- Place Peregian Springs and the Eumundi area in Wide Bay.
- Transfer Mooloolaba and Alexandra Headland to Fairfax.
- Move Longman north, losing the Kallangur/Dakabin/Narangba area.
- Have Dickson shed its remaining Brisbane LGA component into Lilley
- Unite all of the Springfield area in Oxley – many submissions also support uniting Collingwood Park as well.
- Push Moreton southwards, losing suburbs closer to the city and gaining most or all of Rankin's share of Brisbane LGA, as well as the Pallara area.
- Have Rankin take in most of Forde's territory north and west of the Logan River, with Forde contracting southwards into the Gold Coast.
- Leave Bowman unchanged or with only minimal change.

Northern Brisbane

I must admit that I am quite surprised that many submissions make significant changes here – in particular, the proposals to redraw Petrie, Dickson and Lilley so that Petrie lies completely north of the Pine River.

This has the positive outcome of making Petrie a more coherent Division, but I don't feel such large scale change is necessary at this time.

Other suggestions propose:

- Longman either losing its rural territory, or gaining more of it by moving into the Sunshine Coast.

- Ryan crossing the river to take in the Centenary Suburbs.

- Making significant adjustment to the Brisbane/Lilley boundary, with Ryan then taking in areas closer to the CBD.

Some of these may have some merit in isolation, but the reality is that the six northern Brisbane Divisions are collectively within tolerance and should remain self-adjusting. There is no real need for any of these seats to take in areas on the south side of the river, or push outside of the Brisbane suburban area. I do not think these major changes are necessary at this redistribution.

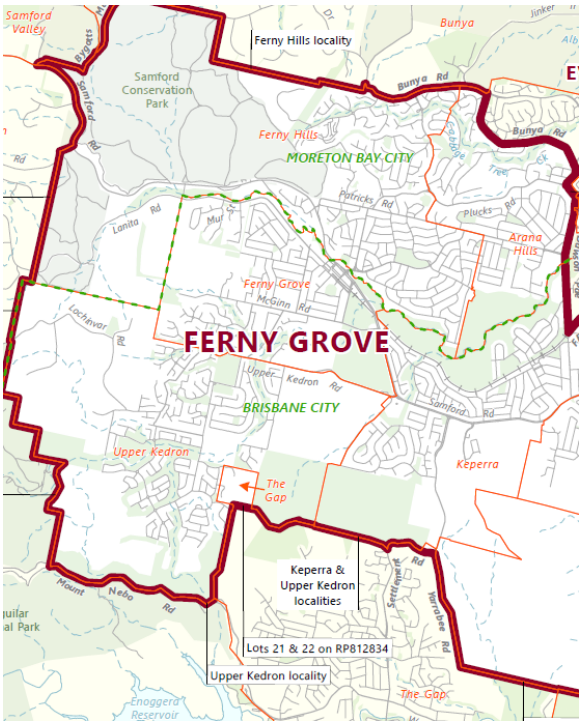
Assuming a major re-arrangement of Dickson, Lilley and Petrie does not occur, the main differences here are how Ryan is drawn.

BOUNDARIES OF RYAN

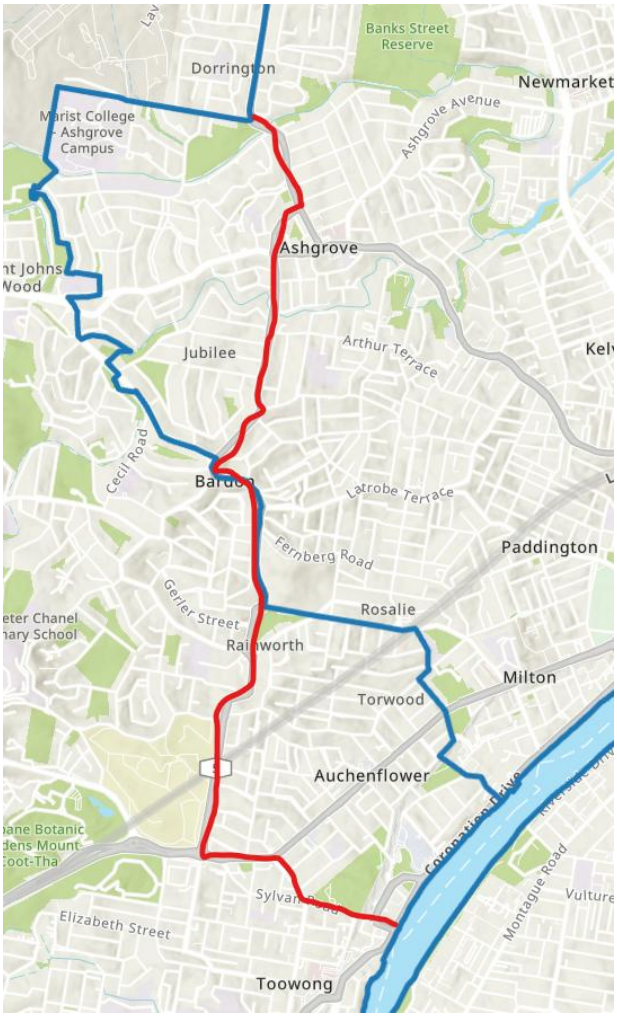
To me, the addition of the Hills District to Ryan still seems to be the most logical way to inject a significant number of electors, without needing to have the seat jump the river or push too close to the Brisbane CBD. This area is somewhat isolated from the remainder of Dickson by the Bunyaville parklands, and seems a closer fit with neighbouring areas in Ryan:



The local state District boundaries appear to fit this pattern, with Ferny Grove straddling the LGA boundary to take in Ferny Hills and Aranda Hills, and using the parklands as its northern boundary.



Whatever the arrangement in the northern suburbs, I also think should be possible to straighten Brisbane/Ryan's boundary along the major roads of the 'Metroad 5' corridor, as I proposed in my original suggestion.

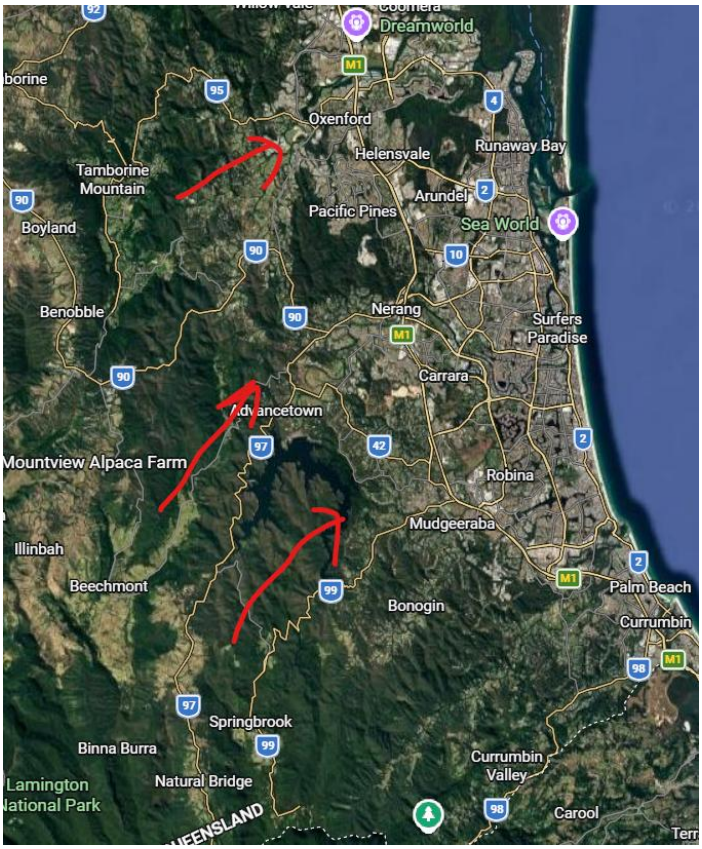


Gold Coast

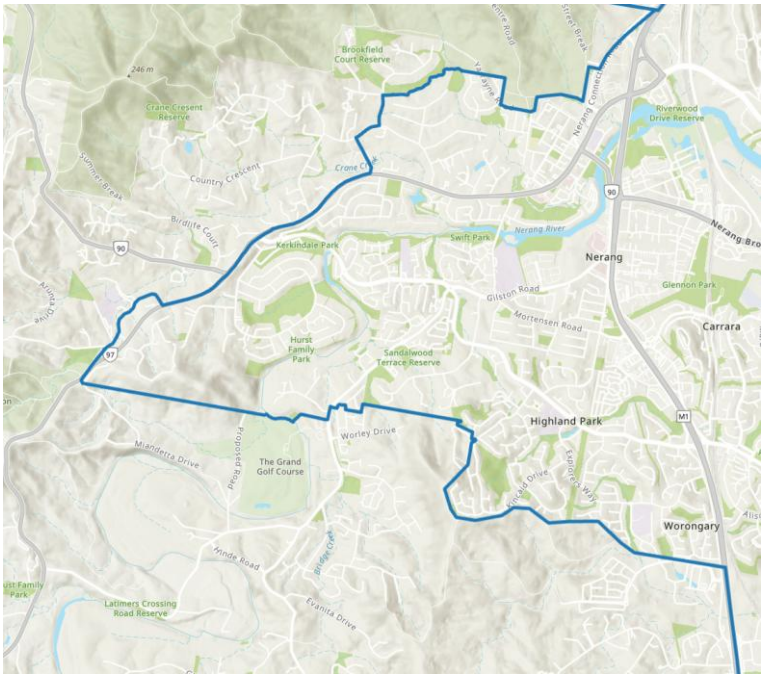
In my suggestions, I strongly recommended re-uniting the Gold Coast hinterland with the coast, given the stronger connections to the east than to the west. It seems that very few of the other submissions agreed with this – some even proposed adding further parts of the Gold Coast to make up Wright's numbers.

I still think my proposal is a very sensible approach. This area is quite cut off from the rest of Wright by national park and the mountains, and Wright is well over quota and needs to lose large numbers of electors.

In many cases, the main or only communication link from these hinterland communities leads eastwards to areas like Mudgeeraba and Nerang, not westwards into Wright.



In some cases, the boundary runs very close or even right through what seem to be connected built up suburban areas. Unless there is some specific local reason why these areas should be separated, it seems extremely logical to me to unite them in a coastal seat.



As far as I can tell, Jeff Waddell's is the only other submission that proposes something along these lines, although would put the entire hinterland into Fadden – I don't think this works quite as well, as the southern hinterland area has no direct connection to other communities within Fadden.

Several suggestions – such as the ALP's – propose more radical change in this area to redraw Wright as a mostly Gold Coast based seat. But since Forde can logically delete most of its Logan LGA component and simply move southwards, this level of rearrangement is not needed.

Southern Brisbane

Almost all the submissions agree to push Forde further south into the Gold Coast and shed its northern and western parts to Rankin. This makes enormous sense, as Rankin is the main Logan LGA Division, and these parts of Forde fit better with a "Logan" seat than a "Gold Coast" one.

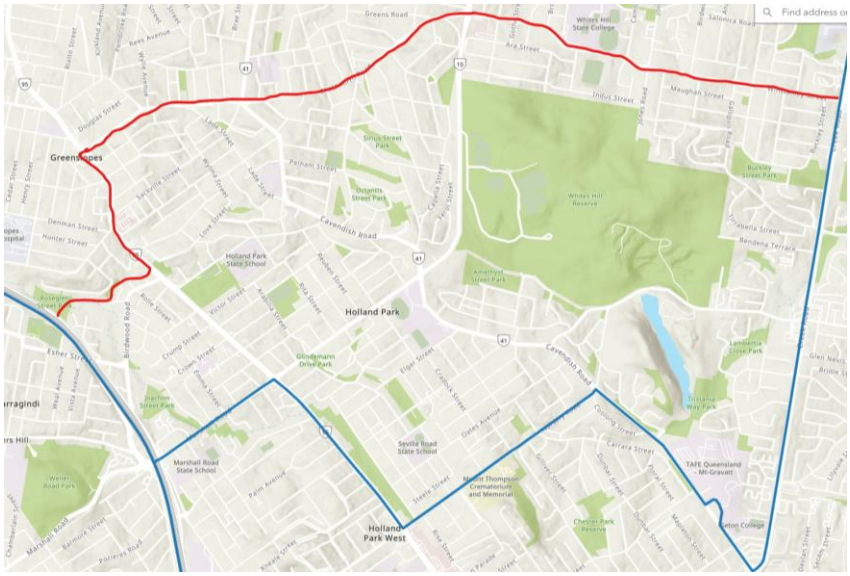
Assuming the Committee adopts this sort of arrangement for Rankin and Forde, the two main differences In this part of Brisbane are:

- Whether to expand Bonner into Griffith (the Carina and/or Holland Park areas), or southwards into Rankin to take in Rochedale South.

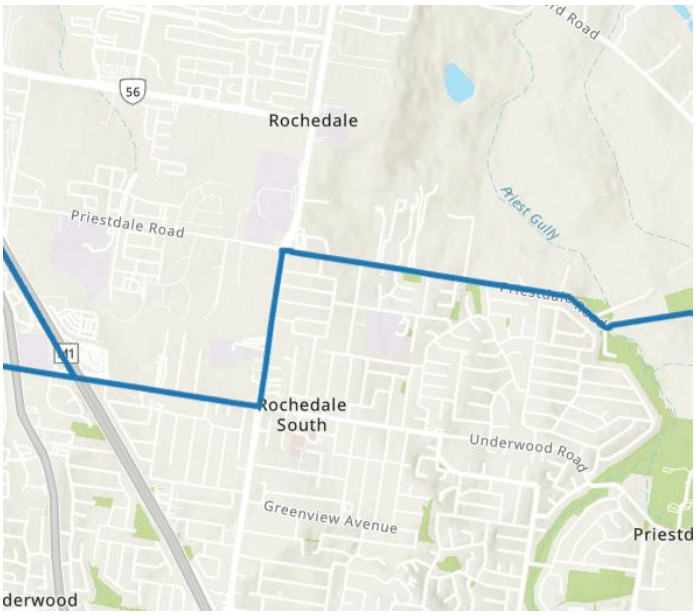
- Whether the Centenary Suburbs should be left in Oxley or transferred to one of Moreton or Ryan.

BONNER

My original proposal suggested moving into the most southern parts of Griffith – this unites all of Mount Gravatt and Holland Park in the seat:



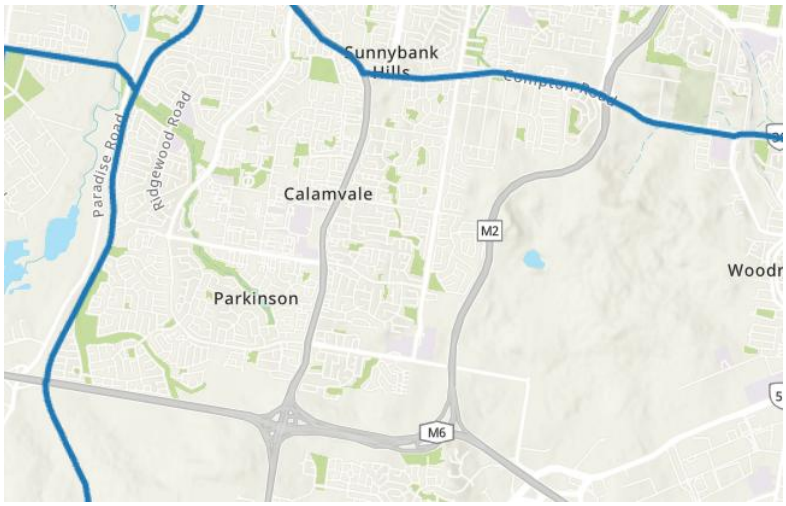
Several other suggestions instead propose adding Rochedale South, uniting this area with Rochedale itself that is already in Bonner. These submissions argue the strong links between Rochedale South and Rochedale, and that the LGA boundary does not reflect true community of interest.



The advantage of the Rochedale proposal is that Griffith does not need to change, and Moreton undergoes less change.

The disadvantage is that the flow on effects to Moreton and Rankin make it almost impossible to transfer the entire Algester/Calamvale/Stretton area to Moreton. Many submissions that transfer Rochedale South to Bonner seem to have difficulty drawing the Moreton/Rankin boundary through this area.

I think these three suburbs have a strong connection to each other, and the motorway and parklands to their immediate east would form a very clear boundary with Rankin. I am happy to bow to local knowledge, but it does seem to make enormous sense to me to unite all of these areas in Moreton.



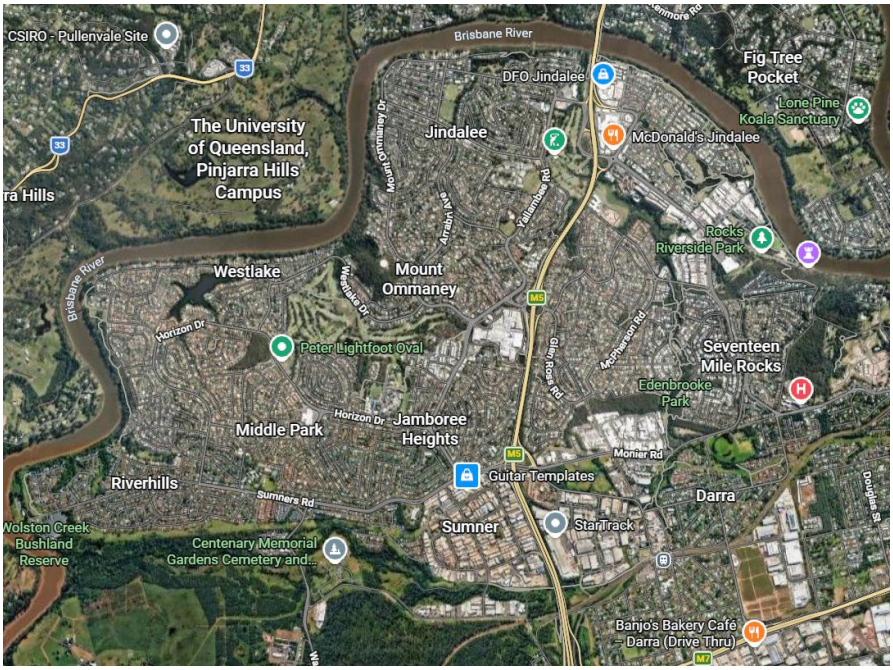
CENTENARY SUBURBS

Depending on how the northern and inner southern suburbs are drawn, a number of suggestions propose moving the Centenary Suburbs to Moreton or even into Ryan.

I personally do not think this is necessary – in particular, I am keeping the northern suburban seats completely self-contained, so I see no need for Ryan to move south of the river.

Transferring this area to Moreton has some merit, given its links to other riverside communities such as Chelmer and Sherwood, and I would have no problem with this arrangement as long as there are no negative consequences on the boundaries of Oxley or Rankin.

There are a few suggestions which split the Centenary Suburbs, which I strongly oppose. These suburbs constitute a fairly self-contained area that should remain united – whatever the Committee's arrangement – unless it is unavoidable for quota.



Ipswich and South-Western Queensland

Almost all submissions have proposed uniting Springfield in the Division of Oxley – this is a major outer suburban centre, and it makes enormous sense to keep the centre and surrounding suburbs together in a single seat.

The main differences here depend largely on what the suggestions do with the Lockyer Valley.

LOCKYER VALLEY

I strongly recommend that the Lockyer Valley be removed from the Division of Wright, as this area is linked only through a very narrow gap to the remainder of Wright:



Those suggestions which leave Lockyer Valley in Wright tend to run into at least one of three problems:

1) Wright is significantly over quota, and if it does not lose the Lockyer Valley then major changes will be needed elsewhere – this tends to lead to messy boundaries around Ipswich and Logan.

2) It becomes more difficult to find other territory for Maranoa to gain electors – suggestions propose either adding further sparsely populated outback territory, or pushing Maranoa down into the Brisbane Valley.

3) Maranoa cannot shed the Kingaroy and Nanango areas to help top up the Divisions further north. A number of suggestions seem to struggle with drawing boundaries in the Burnett or Sunshine Coast regions if Nanango and Kingaroy electors are not available.

My proposal is to transfer the Lockyer Valley to Maranoa, as I feel this is a good way to bring this Division up to quota while not greatly increasing its physical size. This gain then allows Maranoa to shed Kingaroy and Nanango to top up seats further north.

A number of other suggestions propose transferring Lockyer Valley to Groom, with Maranoa instead gaining rural areas west of Toowoomba. This was an option I considered, but I felt the escarpment was a stronger boundary here than further south. However, if locals feel they have a stronger connection up to Toowoomba than across to southern Maranoa, I would have no problem with this arrangement.

Northern and Central Queensland

From Leichhardt down to Capricornia, there is a very high level of agreement between almost all of the suggestions – it is extremely logical to move all these Divisions southwards and anchor them more clearly on their core city. Whatever arrangement the Committee proposes for other parts of rural Queensland, it seems possible for the northernmost Divisions to be drawn in this way.

The differences begin to appear once we reach Flynn, Hinkler and Wide Bay. By this point, the cumulative transfer has reached nearly half a Division's worth of electors, and major changes are necessary.

BUNDABERG

The proximity of Bundaberg to the Flynn/Hinkler border has clearly caused some problems for everybody in trying to draw boundaries in this area.



Ultimately it seems people have gone for one of two options.

1) Split Bundaberg – either along the river or by separating the urban area from its surrounding rural hinterland. This approach requires fewer electors to be transferred to a different seat, but causes a major centre to be divided.

2) Keep Bundaberg and surrounds intact, and transfer Flynn's rural hinterland to other seat(s).

I am surprised to see many suggestions proposing (1) – I understand that this involves fewer changes to neighbouring seats, but splitting a major centre like Bundaberg should only be done as a last resort if it is impossible to balance numbers any other way. Since there are options to balance the numbers (with the hinterland moving to other seats), I feel Bundaberg should be united.

Having one Division uniting Gladstone and Bundaberg – with the hinterland being placed in a Maryborough or Gympie based seat – was similar to the boundaries of these seats in the past, so there is plenty of precedent for this type of arrangement.

If all or most of Bundaberg is placed in Flynn, then reuniting Maryborough with Hervey Bay in Hinkler is a no-brainer, and it is clear that most of the suggestions propose this. Many suggestions also support adding the northern and eastern parts of Gympie LGA to Hinkler as well.

Whatever the arrangements further north, there seems almost universal agreement to push all of Wide Bay, Fairfax and Fisher southwards to soak up the existing excess along the Sunshine Coast. It should be possible to construct boundaries that do not require a Division to straddle outer Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast. The gap between these areas consists of national parks and open space, and forms a very strong divide that seems perfect for a Divisional boundary.



Suggestions related to specific Divisions

There are a number of suggestions relating to specific Divisions or regions, most of which propose something similar to the general suggestions:

- Placing more of Townsville in Herbert
- Centering Dawson on Mackay and Capricornia on Rockhampton
- Transferring more of the Sunshine Coast hinterland into Wide Bay
- Placing more of Logan LGA into Rankin.

I agree with these suggestions, and have implemented most of this in my own proposals.

There are also some suggestions specifically related to naming, with proposals for “Hayden”, “Goss”, and “Macrossan”. One suggestion proposes more Aboriginal names for Divisions, and for balance another suggestion proposes no further Aboriginal names.

While I think some individuals mentioned – particularly Bill Hayden – would be deserving of having Divisions named after them, all 30 seats retain their general arrangement in most people’s suggestions, and I personally would prefer the names being left unchanged.

Suggestions outside the scope of the redistribution

Quite a number of submissions discuss issues that are beyond the scope of a federal redistribution. Many of these are from ‘Anonymous’ submitters, and a couple seem like obvious jokes, but there are suggestions related to:

- Aligning boundaries to environmental or indigenous boundaries
- Complaints about particular sitting members or socio-demographics of certain seats.
- Changing voting laws.
- State electoral district boundaries
- Increasing the number of Divisions in the state.

While some of these may have merit, they are not issues that can be considered by the Redistribution Committee. Perhaps there is further opportunity for the AEC to outline more clearly what can be in and out of the scope of a federal redistribution.