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1<sup>st</sup> July, 2011

The Secretary,  
Office of the Electoral Distribution Commissioners,  
G P O Box F316,  
PERTH  
W A 6841

Dear Secretary,

Re: Proposed change to the Electorate for Plantagenet and Cranbrook Shires

It has been brought to my attention that in the proposed changes to the Electoral boundaries the Shires of Plantagenet and Cranbrook are to be put into the Agricultural region, the Electorate of Wagin. I write to object to this move on the grounds of community of interest.

The Anglican parish of the Southern Ranges consists of these two Shires and what was the Tambellup Shire. I came to be the parish priest in October 2007 and learnt within a short time that the people of the then Tambellup Shire do not look south to the Plantagenet Shire but to the north and east. Indeed, after some conversations we are in the process of moving the people listed within that area to the parish of Katanning and Kojonup.

I read in the booklet *Western Australia's proposed electoral boundaries June 2011* that you have received indication of local sentiment that the Shires of Cranbrook and Plantagenet have a community of interest with the southern part of the Electoral District of Wagin (page 16). It is true that there are some family connections and people are involved with some sporting and recreational activities at Katanning or Kojonup for people who live east of the Albany Highway or north of Tunney.

However, in my experience it is much more likely the majority of people look south to Mount Barker and some local sport commitments occur in Mount Barker. The major shopping centre for the people of Plantagenet Shire is Albany but many more use the facilities of Mount Barker. Likewise the people of Cranbrook look to Mount Barker or Albany rather than the Katanning shopping centre.

The Mount Barker Community College serves both the Shires under discussion and while I know very little about the connections in education I believe that those connections are more south than north or east.

The Cranbrook Shire, as you know, takes in the Frankland River area and the people on our parish roll have either a Frankland or Cranbrook postal address but a number of them have a Mount Barker Post Office box. This indicates to me they look south rather than east. I understand from long term parishioners those on the western side of Frankland River often look to Manjimup.

The people who live in Mount Barker would not consider going to Wagin or other northern and eastern centres. They focus on the area in which they live, or south to shop in Albany, Denmark for relaxation, the scenic areas of the Stirling Ranges and the forest area to the west.

I appreciate there are many factors to be taken into consideration and I can only comment from my experience with people in the area and what I perceive as to where their interests lie. I am sure you will receive other comments from people with expertise in and with the major agricultural, tourist, and viticulture concerns. I would think it is important that the Member of Parliament works for a reasonably homogenous electorate. That becomes an issue not only for the Member of Parliament for Blackwood-Stirling electorate but also for the Wagin electorate. Therefore I believe that the Shires of Plantagenet and Cranbrook are best served in the Blackwood-Stirling electorate even if the proposed change of name to Warren-Blackwood takes place.

Yours faithfully,



Anthony R Wood