

466 OB

From: Electoral Boundaries Review Mailbox
Sent: Friday, 25 August 2023 2:24 PM
To:
Subject: 466 OB
Attachments: Electoral Boundary Submission.pdf

W.A.E.C. RECORDS	
FILE No.	DST 0152
DATE:	20 AUG 2023
ACTION BY:	_____

From: Bevan Eatts [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 20 August 2023 5:53 PM
To: Electoral Boundaries Review Mailbox <boundaries@waec.wa.gov.au>
Subject: Electoral Boundary Submission

[External Email] This email was sent from outside the organisation. Be cautious, particularly with links and attachments.
All SPAM emails must be reported using the instructions on the intranet.

Dear Electoral Boundary Commissioners,

Please see attached letter.

Regards

Bevan Eatts
Mobile

Acknowledgement of Country: The Western Australian Electoral Commission acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which our electoral activities take place. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

iManage 187844

DOC-004026

Dear Redistribution Commissioners,

Firstly, let me start by saying the proposed changes to electoral boundaries will cause the loss of democratic representation for people living in regional Western Australia.

To make it absolutely clear I'm writing this submission on behalf of myself, however I am the current President of the Manjimup Chamber of Commerce and Chair of the Western Australian Water Users Coalition, so I have some experience with engaging the current government and the challenges it now presents.

The proposed merge of the seats of Moore and Northwest Central is disappointing and whilst I understand it is based on numbers to maintain a certain number of people in an electorate, there seems to be a lack of understanding of the geographical size of the proposed new seat. It will be extremely difficult for one elected representative to manage to service their constituents to an acceptable level, which they are entitled to, under these proposed changes. The sheer number of kilometres, towns, schools, hospitals, and communities the new proposed Mid-West seat covering 431,224sqkm, compared to the Mount Lawley seat in the metropolitan area of as little as 18sqkm. There must be some practical consideration given to this proposal.

Whilst there will be challenges for the elected member of Parliament to cover the area if these changes are implemented, the real injustice will be when a vote is held in parliament. The fact that we have one less voice that understands the regional issues and another vote from a metropolitan point of view is where the real inequity will be realised.

In the Warren Blackwood electorate, the logic behind moving Mount Barker townsite into Albany and then having areas on the west side of the Mount Barker townsite included in the seat of Roe makes no logical sense at all. The least the Electoral Commission can do is either shift the whole region into Roe or preferably leave it with Warren Blackwood where it aligns with the food and fibre production of the Warren Blackwood region. The current proposal seems to align with the Labor Party wishes and recommendations and I was under the understanding that the Electoral Commission was an independent, autonomous organisation.

Before the 2021 State election Premier McGowan insisted electoral reform wasn't on the agenda since then the changes the Labor Party made to the Legislative Council has stripped regional constituents of their voice. It is bad enough that we are penalised, in fact treated like second-class citizens, by living in regional Western Australia by lack of services, but to now have our representation taken away is a hard pill to swallow.

When the Legislative Council changes were implemented, Premier McGowan said that we now have 36 members representing all Western Australians. This is simply not the case as you can't get any Labor Legislative Council member to visit the regions. To give you an example, the Western Australian Water Users Coalition (WAWUC) are organising a meeting about the proposed new water legislation. WAWUC are being proactive and invited all MLC in parliament to attend. They were given six weeks' notice before the event. To date there hasn't been one Labor politician that is able to attend. This is an important meeting as it is going to outline concerns of farmers on water security for food production for the state of Western Australia. We were trying to inform the members of the Legislative Council of concerns of farmers before the new water legislation was tabled in parliament. To have no one respond in my opinion highlights the concerning position we find ourselves in, that city-based politicians aren't truly representing all Western Australians.

The disappointing thing is that the proposed recommendations of electoral boundary changes is just going to add to inequality going forward. I ask that the Electoral Commission please reconsider their recommendations and keep as close to the status quo that was in place at the 2021 election as possible and not blindly follow Labor Party recommendations.

Kind Regards

Bevan Eatts

Yanmah WA 6258

Mobile: