

531 OB

From: Electoral Boundaries Review Mailbox
Sent: 21 August 2023 5:02 PM
To: Lachlan Hunter <l.hunter@waec.wa.gov.au>
Subject: 531 OB

From: Lachlan Hunter
Sent: Monday, 21 August 2023 5:02 PM
To: Electoral Boundaries Review Mailbox <boundaries@waec.wa.gov.au>
Subject: Lachlan Hunter | Objections to the proposed boundaries are invited upon the publishing of the proposed boundaries

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to strongly express my disagreement with the proposal to eliminate a regional electorate from the State Parliament of Western Australia.

The importance of maintaining the current 16 non-metropolitan districts cannot be emphasised enough, especially considering the imminent lack of regional representation in the Legislative Council following the 2025 state election.

This proposal poses a serious threat to further marginalise the voices of regional constituents within the State Parliament, and I find this prospect completely unacceptable.

While I understand the need for electoral adjustments, I firmly believe that removing even a single regional electorate is not the appropriate solution.

I would like to specifically address the concerns arising from the Central Wheatbelt proposal. The suggested alteration directly jeopardises the Large District Allowance (LDA) linked to the Central Wheatbelt. The LDA is a vital consideration for geographically large electorates. The proposed changes would result in the Central Wheatbelt electorate covering approximately 96,000 square kilometres, which falls 4,000 square kilometres short.

Unfortunately, under this proposed alteration, the Central Wheatbelt would lose its LDA due to the exclusion of the shires of Cuballing, Wickepin, Kulin, and Kondinin. It is crucial to recognise that there is a significant community interest from constituents within these shires to remain in the Central Wheatbelt. The proposal would require a resident in Hyden (within the Kondinin Shire) to undertake a 400-kilometer round trip to access their local state MP's electorate office. This situation raises concerns about the acceptability of such an arrangement.

I also want to bring attention to another set of concerns, specifically related to the concept of a community of interest. It is evident that there is a noticeable lack of shared characteristics between outer metropolitan areas, Meekatharra, and Moora within the proposed Mid West electorate.

The consolidation of Moore and North West Central into a single seat, the Mid West, dismisses the distinct identities and concerns unique to each region. This approach risks diluting the significance of regional priorities and isolating regional constituents from the decision-making process.

My concerns are exacerbated by the recent elimination of regional districts within the Legislative Council. This development deepens the apprehensions I hold. The removal of regional representation from both the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council could result in an imbalance, disproportionately shifting attention towards metropolitan areas. Such an imbalance may lead to the neglect of the challenges and priorities faced by regional communities.

As a resident of regional Western Australia, I firmly believe that a robust democracy requires fair representation for all citizens, regardless of their geographical location. The existing 16 regional electorates play a vital role in representing regional communities within the State Parliament. The removal of even a single seat from this arrangement would undermine the democratic principles we hold dear.

I implore the Western Australian Electoral Distribution Commissioners to reconsider this proposal and prioritise the enhancement of regional representation within the WA State Parliament. Ensuring the preservation of the current 16 regional seats is essential to guarantee that regional communities maintain a significant voice in decisions that profoundly affect their lives.

I trust that the Commission recognises the importance of regional representation and the pivotal role played by the 16 regional electorates in our democratic system. I am confident that you will thoughtfully consider the perspectives outlined in this submission and act in the best interests of regional communities.

Yours sincerely,

Lachlan Hunter
Northam, WA