



Comments by WA Labor in response to the proposed electoral boundary changes submitted by the Electoral Redistribution Commissioners

These comments are made on behalf of WA Labor to the Electoral Redistribution Commissioners in respect of the proposed 2015 Redistribution of Electoral Districts and Regions for Western Australia.

Throughout this process WA Labor has acknowledged the Commissioners' preliminary observations that it would be difficult to implement a "minimal change" approach to the 2015 boundary review "due to the size and spread of the districts outside the permissible limits".

WA Labor notes that the Commissioners have "found it necessary to adopt a fundamental change model" and acknowledges that significant changes broadly seek to maintain community of interest and numerical balance. WA Labor supports this major decision.

However, there are six main issues with the proposed electoral boundary changes published by the Electoral Redistribution Commissioners.

1. The Commissioners have proposed a policy change to allow districts to be named after prominent deceased Western Australians who are of good repute. Given the significant change to boundaries, WA Labor believes that this policy change will cause greater confusion and is not the best approach at this time.
2. Proposed changes in the South West Region can be improved with a small number of boundary adjustments to ensure the integrity of Local Government boundaries and to better satisfy the community of interest requirement.
3. Significant boundary redraws in the Mining and Pastoral Region allows the Electoral Distribution Commissioners an opportunity to construct districts around population centres that better satisfy the community interest requirement.
4. A number of districts in the North Metropolitan Region split localities. This is undesirable and where possible, WA Labor believes that whole localities should be included within a district boundary.
5. There is a structural problem with the proposed district of West Swan (Mann) as it is a Swan Valley based district but extends over into the City of Wanneroo.
6. The change in the allocation of Erickson and Mount Lawley districts to East and North Metropolitan Regions respectively does not align with the local community's identity.

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24 AUG 2015

It is the strong of view WA Labor that the Commissioners' policy change to allow districts to be named after prominent deceased Western Australians who are of good repute is a premature proposal.

This boundary redraw proposes significant movement of electors. The absolute priority at the conclusion of this process is to minimise the confusion and maximise awareness and certainty of the districts in which electors now form. Naming districts after localities that are significant or central to the district will assist electors with understanding how boundary changes have affected them.

As such, WA Labor recommends that all districts revert to locality names.

Further, given the acknowledgement that Commissioners' felt it would be discourteous to suggest the use of names of Aboriginal persons, a more appropriate approach would have been to flag this proposal at the beginning of this process to allow for greater consideration.

While the names suggested are of respectable and highly regarded persons, the proposal seeks to change two districts named using Aboriginal language. Willagee is a Noongar name and Girrawheen means "place of flowers" or "the place where flowers grow" in an Eastern State Aboriginal language.

WA Labor believes it is not appropriate to adopt these name changes at this time and appreciate that now this policy change has been flagged, it will allow the community to properly consider name changes for future redistributions.

WA Labor's submissions to the Electoral Redistribution Commissioners argued that the current districts in the South West Region satisfy community of interest, population requirements, give due consideration to local government boundaries and means of communication tests. WA Labor noted that the Commissioners' preliminary observations also identified fairly stable population growth in the Region.

WA Labor believes the Commissioners could have delivered stability to the voters in the South West Region by maintaining the current boundaries. However, the Commissioners have proposed a number of changes in the South West Region and as such WA Labor believes they can be improved with a small number of boundary adjustments to ensure the integrity of Local Government boundaries and to better satisfy the community of interest requirement.

WA Labor notes that the Commissioners propose to include the wholly agricultural Shire of Jerramungup in the South West Region by adding this Shire to the district of Albany. The South West Region is defined as "being a Region that includes coastal and forest areas in the south-west of the State", while the Agricultural Region is

defined as, "adjacent to the Mining and Pastoral Region and in which the land use is primarily for agricultural purposes".

It is incongruous that the Shire of Jerramungup should transfer out of Wagin (proposed Roe) and the Agricultural Region when there is no numerical requirement to do so and, in fact, better community of interest and balance of electors would result from maintaining the status quo. The maintenance of the Shire of Jerramungup in Wagin (Roe) would be the balance of 24,186 electors. The district of Wagin would not exceed 100,000 square kilometres and will not require a Large District Allowance.

WA Labor believes that the City of Albany should continue to constitute a state district and that the Shire of Jerramungup not be transferred out of the district of Wagin (Roe). Further, that the South West Region boundaries should not extend to pick up the Shire of Jerramungup.

The proposed district of Collie-Capel is not sensibly drawn. It is disconnected by competing interests in relation to the environmental and local economy matters. The proposed district does not satisfy community of interest and the proposed elector numbers of South West districts are not balanced within the Region.

WA Labor recommends that the Commissioners rebalance the adjoining districts of Collie-Preston (Collie-Capel), Vasse and Warren-Blackwood (Molloy) to provide both a better community of interest by not splitting the City of Busselton, maintaining the integrity of the town of Margaret River in Warren-Blackwood and returning the whole of the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup to the district of Collie-Preston, while providing that the three adjoining districts have a better balance of electors than as currently envisaged of +8.1%, +4.24% and -0.9% respectively.

The Commissioners' propose to abolish the district of Eyre to rebalance districts in the Mining and Pastoral Region and to bolster the elector numbers in the Agricultural Region. With this significant redraw proposed by the Commissioners, WA Labor believes there is further opportunity to adjust districts in the Mining and Pastoral Region to better manage population centres.

WA Labor recommends the transfer of the Shire of Roebourne into the district of North West Central and the transfer of the eastern part of the Shire of Ashburton, Meekatharra and Wiluna Shires into the district of Pilbara. This adjustment will seek to restore the 2007 district of North West and provides for a balance of elector numbers.

WA Labor believes whole localities should be included in one district where possible. The proposed changes to districts in the North Metropolitan Region split localities. This is particularly relevant where the district is named after the specific locality.

The current districts of Hillarys and Ocean Reef are clearly identified as coastal districts, whereas Joondalup is a hinterland district which includes suburbs that surround and directly relate to the Joondalup Regional Centre.

The proposed district of Joondalup does not include the whole locality of Joondalup. WA Labor recommends that this adjustment occur by transferring the locality of Ocean Reef from the district of Joondalup to the district of Ocean Reef (proposed Hale).

WA Labor also recommends the transfer of the locality of Mullaloo from the proposed Joondalup to the proposed Hillarys and the transfer of the locality of Craigie-Beldon from the proposed Hillarys to the proposed Joondalup. The coastal identity of the Mullaloo community more closely aligns with the district of Hillarys.

To balance elector numbers and to better satisfy community of interest and means of communication, WA Labor further recommends the transfer of the remainder of locality of Currabine from the proposed district of Ocean Reef to the proposed district of Joondalup.

These adjustments seek to minimise the disruption to electors from moving between districts and restores the current boundaries of these districts, with only minor adjustments to ensure they are within quota.

The proposed district of West Swan (Mann) has a structural problem – it takes a Swan Valley based seat and extends into the City of Wanneroo.

The proposed district does not satisfy the community of interest test and given the level of population growth in the Swan Urban Growth Corridor does not even seem to be drawn to manage future population centres.

WA Labor notes that the strong population growth of Ellenbrook and surrounds has created the need for significant changes in this region. However, the proposed seat of West Swan (Mann) put forward by the Commission see the creation of a completely disjointed seat, that is split between districts and that is spread across two local government areas with completely separate communities of interest.

WA Labor believes the Commission should take this opportunity to re-unify the suburb of Ballajura within the seat of West Swan (Mann). Ballajura is an established suburb with a consistent population. As the Commissioners have identified, a number of suggestions submitted earlier in the process argued for the unification of the locality of Ballajura within West Swan (Mann). This suggestion is logical and consistent with the requirement to give due consideration to community of interest.

The City of Swan boundary should be restored and the district of West Swan (Mann) should include the remainder of the locality of Ballajura. This will leave Mirrabooka with 24,080 electors and no further adjustments need to be made.

The district of West Swan (Mann) is a Swan Valley based district and should continue to be. WA Labor recommends that the seat of West Swan does not incorporate the suburbs from Wanneroo, including Wangara, Gnangara, Jandabup, Mariginiup and Banksia Grove.

Therefore, to make up electors and to plan for future growth, WA Labor proposes that a section of North Ellenbrook remain in the seat of West Swan (Mann).

It is proposed that the district continues to include electors within the locality of Ellenbrook, north-east of the intersection of Elmridge Parkway and the Broadway. This proposal will see the villages of North Ellenbrook, specifically Malvern Springs, Woburn Park, Lexia and Annie's Landing remain in the district of West Swan (Mann).

The consequential effect of these adjustments see the proposed district of Butler extend to pick up the remainder of Yanchep and most of the locality of Carramar from the proposed district of Wanneroo. This change will also see the localities of Wanneroo reunited into the proposed district and the integrity of the eastern Local Government boundary restored. The elector numbers within Butler and Wanneroo will be balanced at 26,894 and 26,521 respectively.

These adjustments better satisfy community of interest, while also allowing for the continual growth areas within West Swan (Mann) in the southern part of the district, Dayton and Brabham to expand without causing further challenges for future redistributions and will serve to minimise the disruption to electors.

The Commissioners propose to exchange the districts of Girrawheen (Erickson) and Mount Lawley from the North Metropolitan and East Metropolitan Regions, suggesting that the district of Girrawheen shares an affinity to localities immediately to the east.

The localities that make up the proposed district of Girrawheen are located within the City of Wanneroo; a northern suburb based local government. Electors within the district of Girrawheen have no shared community of interest to the east. The electors in Girrawheen are divided from the east by the expansive Gnangara Pine plantation, with no direct road links from one end to the other and less interaction between the communities. The heavily populated suburbs within Girrawheen are a considerable distance from the other densely populated parts within the City of Swan.

Further, the electors within the proposed district of Mount Lawley identify with, recreate and frequently travel within the east. With the proposed district of Mount

Lawley gaining Inglewood electors, WA Labor believes the district has a greater affinity with the east than with the north.

WA Labor has been modest in its objections and concentrated on where boundaries can be improved and strengthened. WA Labor has resisted the temptation to object to wide-ranging amendments particularly to the East and South Metropolitan Regions.

In closing, WA Labor thanks the Commissioners for their time and effort in this process and submits these comments for your review.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Gorman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Patrick Gorman
State Secretary