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16 May 2007

Hon Wayne Martin
Chairman
Western Australian Electoral Commission
111 St George's Terrace
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Sir

Subject: Western Australian Electoral Commission Boundary Redistribution 2007

The Council at its meeting held on 8 May 2007, discussed a number of proposed submissions by political parties, which have been submitted to the Western Australian Electoral Commission, in regard to boundary redistributions in the South West Region.

The Council, was of the opinion that if the Shire of Plantagenet was relocated to an electorate to the west, which was located in Margaret River, or as far east as an electorate centred in Esperance, this would impose serious restrictions upon effectively communicating with the elected member.

A motion was then passed at the meeting "That the 2007 Electoral Distribution Committee be advised that the Council supports the State Boundary Redistribution Submission incorporating the Shires of Manjimup, Boyup Brook, Kojonup, Broomehill, Tambellup, Cranbrook, Plantagenet, Denmark, Gnowangerup and Jerramungup."

The Council, believes that in the interest of the Shire of Plantagenet, it also makes a submission focusing on the proposed electoral change in the South West Region, being suggested as "Great Southern".

There is a belief that a regional electorate based around a dominant regional service centre is economically and socially desirable for all people living within the Shire of Plantagenet.

The Council has therefore prepared the following submission supporting the proposed new "Great Southern electorate"

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Fathers", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John Fathers
ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Submission From Shire of Plantagenet

This submission is in support of a new electorate, located to the north of Albany, which is the direct result of population growth within the Albany electorate.

The new electorate would incorporate the Shires of Manjimup, Boyup Brook, Kojonup, Broomehill, Tambellup, Cranbrook, Plantagenet, Denmark, Gnowangerup and Jerramungup.

This proposed new electorate embracing local government boundaries would have common links in regard to economic development, tourism, land use patterns and physical features, and have been grouped together by the Regional Development Commission boundaries.

Community of Interest

The proposed new electoral district will be based around strong historical links in the areas of commerce, government service provision and social infrastructure. The interaction that exists between these communities has developed in both sporting links in the areas of football, bowling, golf, swimming, cricket and rifle clubs, and bonds between emergency service groups, such as State Emergency Services, Volunteer Fire Units, and Water Catchments Management Groups.

Land Use Patterns

With changing climatic conditions, land use within the area is changing from the traditional agricultural environment, to plantation timber and native forest management. The Tree Farming programs within the proposed electorate, have identified the need for significant plantings of eucalypt, sandalwood and pine both for harvesting and salinity management.

The gradual change from broadacre farming, to more concentrated forms of agriculture and aquaculture, within the region have proliferated, within a short period of time. The development of vineyards and cellar door sites with supporting dining facilities has assisted tourism within the area. This development has resulted in many new opportunities for city folk seeking lifestyle changes to move into the proposed "Great Southern electorate". The port of Albany also provides loading terminals which can assist in the development of export markets for locally grown and developed products.

Means of Communication

Geographically, the proposed Great Southern electorate is bisected by the Albany Highway, which runs from Albany in the south to Kojonup in the north, and all the centres within these shires, from Manjimup and Boyup Brook to the west and Gnowangerup and Jerramungup to the east, can be accessed from highways and major roads leading off the central Albany Highway corridor. These available transport routes

would allow a firm communication link between the various centres, and easy access by the local representative for the proposed "Great Southern electorate".

Albany as a service centre

Albany is a centre for many regional government services and business services. There is a strong argument that the provisional electorate of Great Southern would enhance the strong communication links to all incorporated shires, as Albany has the **only** daily commercial air service operating from Perth to the south west which improves communication facilities to the proposed surrounding areas.

Physical Features

The proposed Great Southern electorate is home to some of Western Australia's most important national parks and State forests including the Walpole Wilderness Area, Warren, Porongurup, Beedelup, Shannon and Stirling Range National Parks, and part of the Fitzgerald River National Park.

The relatively untouched nature of the region's natural attractions is the major point of difference and a continued promotional focus for the development of regional tourism, and further population growth within the region.

Existing Boundaries

Although the proposed Great Southern Electorate is a major change from the present electorates of Wagin and Roe, much of the electorate is predominately serviced in the areas of education, police and health from regional offices based in Albany. The transport infrastructure for most of this area filters into the port facilities at Albany, while the service support skills for the electorate are located in Albany.

Current local government and district boundaries

All local government boundaries have remained intact, but the shires of Kojonup, Boyup Brook, Broomehill, Tambellup, Jerramungup and Gnowangerup have been grouped with Denmark and Manjimup to form the new Great Southern Electorate.

The Council believes there is a strong justification for developing an electorate centred on a significant proportion of the shires of the Great Southern Region, based around a dominant regional service centre. This model is both economically and socially beneficial.