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From: Doug
Sent: Tuesday, 15 August 2023 5:05 PM
To: Electoral Boundaries Review Mailbox
Subject: Change in Electoral Boundaries

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Dear Redistribution Commissioners,

I very strongly object to the electoral boundaries you have proposed for the Legislative Assembly.

The decision to replace another regional electorate with a metropolitan one has nothing to do with serving rural Western Australian. This move is all about politics, as it will further concentrate votes in populated areas to the detriment of rural communities.

Regional electorates, which already cover larger areas, demand regional MLAs to navigate greater distances, represent more diverse communities, and judiciously distribute their funding allocations across more expansive areas. The merging of regional seats also threatens to centralise power in metropolitan areas, causing an imbalance in representation where urban concerns overshadow regional interests.

The proposed move signals the continuation of a worrying trend that has stripped regional voters of 18 crucial upper house representatives. Since the 1987 redistribution, 12 lower house seats have been stripped from regional WA. These considerations necessitate a rethink of these boundary alterations to secure fair representation for all Western Australians.

Of the many changes proposed, I object most strongly to (examples below)

The abolition of the Moore electorate and the abolition of the North West Central electorate and creation of a new Mid-west electorate. This separates areas with a strong community of interest such as Exmouth and Carnarvon from each other.

While the Moore electorate maintained connection between communities of interest in a large electorate, the new Mid-West electorate lumps together such a vast variety of communities, it is difficult to see where Commissioners found commonality and to recommend such a change indicates that they are totally out of touch with reality. The proposed seat would span from Muchea on the outskirts of Perth to just a few kilometres south of Newman in the north. More than 1,000km from top to tail and no large population centre within its boundaries. This is a remarkably difficult electorate for any local member to service and all but impossible for any local member to be held to account by their constituents.

As is clear by the data released by the Commission, there is no justification for the creation of a new electorate within the metropolitan area as the metropolitan area is already well within acceptable limits of representation.

It seems that this is yet another move by Government to further stifle the voice of rural communities, so, by default, it is a direct attack on our democracy. Accordingly, I urge you to reevaluate your proposal, ensuring the preservation of the 16 regional seats.

Sincerely,

Douglas C Blandford