

Mr Peter Rundle MLA  
Member for Roe  
83 Federal Street  
NARROGIN WA 6312

Western Australian Distribution Commissioners

Electoral Boundaries WA  
GPO Box F316  
Perth WA 6841  
Via email: [boundaries@waec.wa.gov.au](mailto:boundaries@waec.wa.gov.au)

## **2023 ELECTORAL BOUNDARY REVIEW: COMMENT ON BOUNDARY SUGGESTIONS**

Dear Commissioners,

I appreciate the opportunity to make this submission and forward my objections and suggestions on the 2023 electoral boundary review.

The main focus of this submission is the proposed changes to the electorates of Central Wheatbelt and Plantagenet which I believe can be amended.

Below I have outlined my objections and proposed solutions which give the Commissioners the opportunity to provide a balanced amendment to electoral boundary changes.

As the Commissioners are aware, Section 16I of the *Electoral Act 1907* requires the Commissioners to give due consideration to the following factors when determining district boundaries:

- community of interest;
- land use patterns;
- means of communication, means of travel and distance from the capital;
- physical features;
- existing boundaries of districts;
- existing local government boundaries; and
- the trend of demographic changes.

I disagree with the Commissioner's decision-making process to change electoral boundaries which focuses on elector numbers regardless of other factors, as stated on page 4 of the Electoral Distribution Commissioners Explanatory Statement.

Under Section 16I of the Act, it requires the Commissioners to consider the full list of factors. Rather than numbers, redistribution should be about best matching communities of interest and industry as well as improving equal representation for regional areas.

As stated on Page 5 of the Electoral Distribution Commissioners Explanatory Statement, "In the view of the Commissioners, it is important to maintain (as far as is

practicable) close comparison between the number of electors within the various districts.”

By trying to equalize the number of voters in each electorate, the Commissioners have overlooked other important factors such as matching communities of interest and retaining local government boundaries, along with challenges of travel and communication.

The myriad of differing community factors and land use factors only extend the complexity of issues across an electorate instead of improving service delivery. The parity of voting influence by trying to service an electorate of this complexity is lost.

### **Central Wheatbelt**

I object to the Commissioners' proposed boundary changes of the Central Wheatbelt electorate.

The significant boundary change of moving the Shire of Kondinin into the Roe electorate will not only increase the serviceable area of Roe by more than 7,000 square kilometres, but will contribute to the loss of Central Wheatbelt's Large District Allowance (LDA) status which increases the challenge of servicing the Central Wheatbelt electorate.

The electoral distribution will also reduce accessibility for local constituents to their Members of Parliament.

Currently Central Wheatbelt has an electorate office in Northam and one in Merredin.

It is much more logical for Central Wheatbelt to retain the Shire of Kondinin as the match of community interests, land uses, means of communication and means of travel, and trend of demographic changes are more similar to those of Central Wheatbelt while Central Wheatbelt would also retain the LDA status and be serviced by the Merredin office which is next door to the Shire of Kondinin.

### **Shire of Plantagenet and Warren-Blackwood**

The Shire of Plantagenet should be maintained as a whole and remain within the Warren-Blackwood electorate.

Commissioners' proposal to remove the Shire of Plantagenet from the Warren-Blackwood electorate, splitting it between the electorates of Roe and Albany ignores the Electoral Act's requirements to maintain local government boundaries where possible, to maintain connection between communities of common interest, and to deliver sustainable electoral boundaries.

The existing boundaries of the Albany electoral district are well within the VFADE requirements set out by the Act and the Regional Australia Institute 'Regional Movers Index' identifies Albany as one of the nation's growth hot spots. This makes an increase to the footprint of the Albany electorate unnecessary and unjustified. By including sections of the Plantagenet LGA, Commissioners are ensuring that this electorate will once again require redistribution in the next boundary review.

Shire of Plantagenet shares closer community and economic links with other Shires in Warren-Blackwood than it does with Albany. Viticulture, horticulture and agriculture are a shared common interest and land use pattern of those communities.

I suggest that the Shire of Plantagenet be retained as a whole Shire and is distributed to the Warren-Blackwood electorate.

This is also an opportunity to suggest there is scope to retain 16 regional seats in Western Australia and I strongly disagree with the proposal to merge the electorates of North West Central and Moore into one seat whilst creating a new seat in the metropolitan area.

I strongly support the objections raised by The Nationals WA in their submission; *The Nationals WA- Objections to proposed boundaries 230818*.

I wish to thank the Commissioners for your consideration of my suggestions above.

Sincerely

**Peter Rundle**

**Member for Roe**