

392 OB

From: Electoral Boundaries Review Mailbox
Sent: Friday, 25 August 2023 1:27 PM
To:
Subject: 392 OB

W.A.E.C. RECORDS	
FILE No.	OST 0152
DATE:	18 AUG 2023
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From: Ananda Barton <ananda.barton@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, 18 August 2023 3:17 PM
To: Electoral Boundaries Review Mailbox <boundaries@waec.wa.gov.au>
Subject: Proposed electoral boundaries

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Dear Redistribution Commissioners,

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to comment on the proposed Legislative Assembly electoral boundaries.

I am concerned at the proposal to replace a regional electorate with one in the metropolitan area. This will dilute the influence of regional Western Australia at a time when regional communities confront serious challenges. The suggested change discards shared community interests; ignores protests from regional Western Australians and rejects proposals to preserve the current level of regional representation.

Regional electorates, are already significantly larger than their metropolitan counterparts, requiring regional MLAs to travel greater distances, represent more diverse communities, and distribute their funding allocations across more expansive areas. The merging of regional seats risks voter exclusion due to the increase in already sizable constituencies. It also threatens to centralise power in metropolitan areas, causing an imbalance in representation where urban concerns overshadow regional interests. The proposed boundaries disregard the need to preserve the unity of our communities and dismiss public advocacy for the continued existence of the current sixteen regional seats. This 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.

In particular I am concerned that;
Combining the Moore and North West Central electorates in the new Mid-west electorate creates an excessively large electorate, which the 'tyranny of distance' will reduce the ability of an MLA to represent adequately;
Partitioning of regional shires across Western Australia to transfer a small number of voters between electorates threatens to rupture tightly knit regional communities who depend on shared essential services. These communities, which often operate as interconnected units, may face significant disruption due to such electoral adjustments. It is important that regional local councils remain undivided, ensuring their ability to continue serving their constituents

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effectively. Electoral considerations should not override the necessity of maintaining the unity and integrity of these regional communities for a modest shift in votes.

Like many West Australians with links to the regions I am deeply concerned at the proposed changes and I hope you will take the opportunity to minimize the disruption to regional WA. I hope that you can see the way to preserve sixteen regional seats.

Yours faithfully,

Richard Ananda Barton

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Acknowledgement of Country: The Western Australian Electoral Commission acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which our electoral activities take place. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.