

W A E C
- 7 MAY 2023

C47

From: Electoral Boundaries Review Mailbox
Sent: Tuesday, 9 May 2023 5:48 PM
To:
Subject: FW: Comment on submissions in relation to review of electoral boundaries

Comment (47)

From: Stan Scott <ceo@cuballing.wa.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 8 May 2023 11:02 AM
To: Electoral Boundaries Review Mailbox <boundaries@waec.wa.gov.au>
Subject: Comment on submissions in relation to review of electoral boundaries

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the submissions in relation to the review of electoral boundaries.

The removal of the distinction between the metropolitan area and regional electorates as a result of recent changes has presented possibility of stretching peri urban electorates into nearby regional areas and abolish a regional electorate. I think this would be a poor outcome.

Western Australia on the national stage argues that Western Australia is the engine room of the Australian economy but fares poorly when it comes to return from a federal system. The same argument could be made in relation to regions as the engine room of the WA economy. The WA upper house used to mirror the model of the Australian Senate with equal representation for each state. The number of votes required to elect a senator from Tasmania is a fraction of that required to elect a NSW Senator. WA's regions no longer have the support of a weighted upper house.

My position is apolitical – that is not party political but fiercely regional. We are at a very unusual point in history in WA where we have the Labor Party in control of both houses of parliament with substantial majorities. This is largely due to the siege mentality that developed in WA during the pandemic which was then reflected in the ballot box. The dysfunction of what had been the main opposition party amplified the change. The new government wasted no time in changing the Electoral Act to press home the advantage. Electoral regions have been abolished in the upper house which will considerably erode regional influence in the parliament. There are some submissions, including that by the Labor Party, that suggest abolishing one regional electorate in favour of creating a new metropolitan seat. With the ink barely dry on the changes to the Legislative Council I think that abolishing a regional electorate would be both unfair and unwise.

It is my view that any change in the balance between Metropolitan and Country Electorates in the 2023 distribution would be premature.

Best Regards
Stan Scott
Chief Executive Officer

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