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## 2023 ELECTORAL BOUNDARY REVIEW: COMMENT ON BOUNDARY SUGGESTIONS

Dear Commissioners,

The Nationals WA have reviewed the written suggestions made to the 2023 review of electoral boundaries and wish to submit the following comments.

We reaffirm our submission, which demonstrates both the need and the method to maintain fair and equitable Legislative Assembly representation for regional, rural, and remote communities. We note that numerous suggestions from across the state share our support for retaining sixteen regional seats and trust these will be considered with the concern they deserve.

While we reaffirm the need to maintain the sixteen regional electorates this redistribution, it must be noted that some suggestions do not set as high a bar for democratic equity.

### WA LABOR SUBMISSION

The suggestion offered by WA Labor is designed to benefit its political fortunes, rather than uphold the democratic foundations our State is built on. This suggestion does not respect section 16I of the Electoral Act and offers little to no justification or evidence for its suggestions and as such seeks to obscure the fact it sets up regional electorates for further redistributions in the future.

As in 2019, WA Labor have attempted to claim the community of Two Rocks, within the metropolitan area, is an appropriate fit for the seat of Moore. This was dismissed at the last electoral boundary review and should be dismissed again because localities within the City of Wanneroo do not share communities of interest or common land uses with Shires of Moore, or indeed of North West Central.

Our calculations of WA Labor's proposal identifies the population of a remodelled Moore electorate would remain too low for it to be considered sustainable (VFADE tolerance at -22%), leaving it at a heightened risk of further redistributions. At the same time, WA Labor's proposed Kalgoorlie electorate would be severely over quota. These are not sustainable proposals and again fall short of the requirements of the Act.

The proposal to create an 'Eastern Hills' seat appears to be an attempt to recreate the old seat of Roleystone, while shoehorning Chittering, Gidgegannup, and Bullsbrook into it. This proposal is too light on detail to be proposed with any serious intent. How WA Labor wishes to deal with the community of Wooroloo remains a mystery, while the local governments of Swan, York, Northam, Armadale, Kalamunda and Mundaring are split along arbitrary lines with no commonality identified.

If a seat was to be created along the Darling Scarp, then a seat focused on Mundaring, Stoneville and Bullsbrook would be much more appropriate but should be at the expense of Kalamunda or Forrestfield. This seat could also easily remain within the existing metropolitan boundary to maintain communities of interest.

## LIBERAL PARTY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA SUGGESTION

The Nationals WA strongly agree with the Liberal Party of WA that there is no need to abolish a non-metropolitan seat. As they have stated, “Provided there are sensible boundary changes to some seats where necessary, all existing 59 seat can continue to be represented in Parliament”.

However in news which may delight Mr Miffing, The Nationals WA do not support the approach the Liberal Party of WA have taken in suggesting the community of Collie moves into the seat of Roe. Collie is a key community within the South West of Western Australia, with strong economic and social connection to communities such as Bunbury, Australind, and Capel. Collie has minimal connection to the seat of Roe and towns such as Esperance, Lake Grace, Hopetoun, and Gnowangerup.

The Commissioners may consider the comments from 2019 relating to Collie and importance of Collie to the South West in their consideration of the submission by the Liberal Party of WA.

Residents in Narrogin and Williams are drawn south toward Katanning and Albany, not north to Northam. Similarly, Plantagenet residents tend south and west to Denmark and Albany, not east to Roe communities such as Esperance. Other submissions have shown that Narrogin and Williams can feasibly remain in Roe; and that Plantagenet can remain in Warren-Blackwood.

## OTHER SUGGESTIONS

The Nationals WA notes the submission by Drs Fullarton and Blake, which sets out its own method for resolving North West Central’s current large variation from the average. Their proposal differs from ours but nevertheless puts forward a plan for a sustainable North West Central (name notwithstanding) electorate.

Some submissions seek to minimise the use of large seat allowance (LDA). The Nationals WA put to Commissioners that these submissions fail to meet the values set out in the Act and fall short of delivering democratic equity for all West Australians.

Large District Allowance exists because the Act acknowledges the sparsity of population and vast distances in the vast regional areas of Western Australia. The Act recognises that for democratic equity to be achieved, fair access must be granted to parliamentary representatives for all West Australians.

Some suggestions – including that from WA Labor – support the creation of a seat centred on Ellenbrook and hitherto a complete reconstruction of the north and east metropolitan seats. As we have suggested, this electoral boundary review provides an opportunity to redraw metropolitan electoral districts to ensure sustainable electorates into the future. Doing so must not, however, come at the expense of regional communities' access to representation.

The Nationals WA thanks Commissioners for the opportunity to provide comment on the submissions received and wishes them good judgement as they consider all suggestions.

Yours sincerely,



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