



Comment on suggestion 40

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4 pages

**COMMENTS ON SUGGESTIONS
FOR THE PROPOSED
REDISTRIBUTION OF
COMMONWEALTH ELECTORAL
DIVISIONS IN THE STATE OF
VICTORIA 2020**

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OVERVIEW

Please accept my comments on suggestions and submissions made to the AEC. These comments cover some of the major party suggestions (and contents therein) rather than a comprehensive review of every submission and every inclusion.

Many of the comments made below are relevant to other submissions that have been made.

The detailed suggestions made by Mark Mulcair, Darren McSweeney, Hal Colebatch and others deserve as much recognition from the Commissioners as those received from the political parties. Their analysis, rigour and evenhandedness must be complimented and given equal consideration as those with a more vested interest.

MAJOR PARTY SUGGESTIONS

Suggestions made by the major parties always need to be taken with a grain of salt as partisan and even sometimes factional advantage often take the priority over sound boundary outcomes.

Liberal Party Proposals

Chisholm / Deakin / Menzies

- Proposal is that Menzies be located entirely south of the Yarra River. Southern boundary of Menzies is proposed to be Whitehorse Road.
- This proposal destroys community of interest in suburbs such as Box Hill and Blackburn. These suburbs have strong suburban identity – shopping, schools, sporting clubs that span the proposed boundary.
- There is limited community of interest between these suburbs and areas north of the Eastern Freeway.
- The City of Whitehorse would be divided into three.
- The proposed boundary between Deakin and Chisholm cuts the suburbs of Nunawading and Forest Hill in two removing community of interest.

Hawke

- The proposal for combining the southern parts of Wills and Cooper can only be described as 'cheeky' as it is obviously designed to bring maximum discomfiture to the ALP and the Greens.
- However, there is some merit to the suggestion as there very few obvious potential boundaries in the northern part of Wills. Any new boundary would split suburbs or have boundaries on secondary roads. This suggestion would remove this issue.
- However, this does not overcome the obvious community of interest of the current boundaries where local government areas and transport routes are well defined.
- The moving of Wills northwards has knock on effects in adjoining Divisions and areas such as dividing the suburbs of Moonee Ponds and Essendon which have close community links.

Higgins / Macnamara

- The proposal to regularize this boundary along Williams Road / Hotham Street and remove the Caulfield 'tail' is supported.

Hotham

- It must be noted that I advocated the abolition of Hotham in my previous submission.
- However, the suggestion for Hotham does provide legibility and community of interest in that it follows the major transport lines and roads.

Australian Labor Party Proposals

Ballarat

- The proposal to join Bacchus Marsh with Melton in the new Division of Hawke is supported.
- However, including the Gordon SA2 in Hawke means that the outskirts of Ballarat are excluded from the Division of Ballarat.
- Similarly, the inclusion of areas such as Bannockburn in Ballarat cannot be supported. What is the justification for excluding the outskirts of Ballarat but including the outskirts of Geelong in the Division of Ballarat? Any notion of community of interest has been totally ignored.

Chisholm / Deakin

- Proposal to move Deakin eastwards is supported.
- Canterbury Road as a southern boundary is more legible and does not split suburbs like the Liberal Party proposal.
- The Canterbury Road boundary should continue and not cut Box Hill into two.

Chisholm / Hotham

- These boundaries seem designed to maximize the ALP vote in Chisholm and nothing more. Including Clayton South and Box Hill in Chisholm, and excluding Wheelers Hill is all too obvious a partisan ploy.
- The resulting boundaries for Hotham result in it looking 'spreadeagled' on the map and make it even more 'bits and pieces' than previously.
- Including Hughesdale in Chisholm does reinforce community of interest on local and LGA grounds.

Hawke

- Under the ALP proposal, Hawke would join McEwen as a 'bits and pieces' division that joins disparate parts of Western Melbourne and the peri-urban fringe.
- There is no evident community of interest between the Ballarat outskirts and areas such as Wallan to the north of Melbourne – Wallan having more in common with other Hume Freeway communities in McEwen or Nicholls.

McEwen

- The ALP proposal perpetuates the ongoing issue of McEwen being a 'bits and pieces' division that joins disparate parts of Northern Melbourne and the peri-urban fringe.
- There is no evident community of interest between Craigieburn and areas in Nillumbik such as Warrandyte North and Research.

The Nationals Proposals

Gippsland

- Proposal is to move parts of South Gippsland Shire to Gippsland and swap it for parts of the Latrobe Valley.
- South Gippsland Shire has a very cohesive identity and there is little justification for splitting the LGA across two divisions. Toora and Welshpool are closer to Foster than they are to Yarram. There are also school and sporting links (the Mid Gippsland Football League for example that will include in 2021, Foster, Toora and Mirboo North) that link these areas with others in the Division of Monash.