



# Comment on suggestion 43

Australian Greens Victoria

5 pages

**From:** Clare Quinn  
**To:** [FedRedistribution - VIC](#)  
**Subject:** Response regarding redistribution  
**Date:** Friday, 1 December 2017 1:29:10 PM  
**Attachments:** [Greens comment on suggestions for Victorian Redistribution.pdf](#)

---

Hi folks

Please find attached a letter with our response, due today.

Please call me with any queries on [REDACTED]

Cheers, Clare Quinn

>

>

>>

## **Australian Greens Victoria - Comments on redistribution suggestions**

I write on behalf of the Australian Greens Victoria to make comment on a number of public suggestions that have been made in relation to the Victorian redistribution.

We welcome the large number of submissions in support for changing the name of the electorate of Batman to Simon Wonga and also support for changing the name of McMillan.

The Australian Greens Victoria are also pleased to see how many suggestions have been made on the Victorian seat redistribution. The increase in participation is something all parties should welcome, including the increased volume of submissions from individuals.

Many of the boundary changes presented by these individuals are ones we had not considered, and some strike us as having considerable merit. Nevertheless, it seems to us that many of these ideas would be good ways to divide the state if the division was starting from scratch, with no pre-existing boundaries. However, this is not the case. Minimising the disruption to electors, MPs and the electoral commission that comes with moving large numbers of voters should not be an overriding consideration when really undesirable boundaries exist. However, we think it is an important factor to consider among others.

Consequently, we regard the fact that the Australian Greens suggestion retains 80% of electors in their current electorate as a strong point in its favor. We have not measured the numbers for all the independent submissions, but many of them appear to be much lower. By their own assessment the Liberal submission move almost a quarter of voters, which we consider undesirably disruptive, while Labor's moves almost a third. For example, the Labor suggestion could see well over a third of electors in the seat of Maribyrnong be moved from the seat, despite it being only slightly outside the acceptable number of electors.

It seems that many of the radical changes proposed by the Labor and similar submissions are driven by a desire to remove areas seen as favourable to the Greens from where they might elect new members, such as from Batman and Wills into Melbourne, despite very negative flow-on effects into the surrounding seat boundaries.

The extent of this radical surgery is manifest in the unprecedented shape of Labor's proposed new seat of Fraser which fails to meet any of the statutory criteria, but is a result of Labor wanting to radically change the electoral math of inner Melbourne.

### **Inner City**

The suburb of Clifton Hill provides a specific example of our concerns about unnecessary movement. Labor, having gone to great lengths to explain why Clifton Hill belonged in Batman at the 2010 redistribution has now reversed its position. Many of the other submissions also suggest putting Clifton Hill back into Melbourne. If this drawing of the boundaries on a single occasion is considered in isolation, such a proposal could make sense. However, it is almost certain that enrollment in the inner city will continue to grow, ensuring that the electorate of Melbourne will need to shed voters at future redistributions as well as at this one.

If Clifton Hill is restored to Melbourne it will be the obvious area to take out next time, leaving a situation where it will have gone from Melbourne to Batman to Melbourne to Batman/Wonga in the space of about 12 years, rather like an unfortunate part of Europe in

the Middle Ages. A similar situation applies to the nearby section of North Fitzroy north of Park Street, currently in Wills. In this context we suggest it is far better to leave these areas where they are, and make more modest reductions to the division of Melbourne.

Labor's submission proposes to move Flemington into Maribyrnong without any justification and Kensington to Gellibrand, which it provides some arguments for. We submit that Flemington and Kensington, despite currently being separated by a local government boundary, have an unusually strong community of interest. The Flemington-Kensington Progress Association represented the area for many years and the two suburbs share institutions bearing their joint names such as a community newspaper, community legal center and a bowls club. Many community groups and networks are focused on both suburbs. There are no equivalent bodies and community groups and networks joining Kensington to Footscray or even Flemington to Ascot Vale. Until recently most of the two suburbs were united in the city of Moonee Valley, and there is a groundswell of community support to reunite them by bringing Flemington into the the city of Melbourne, now that Kensington has moved there. Both areas combine large housing commission high-rise, extensive new developments and older housing dating to a similar era. Besides their similarity to each other, both have more in common with North Melbourne, than with Ascot Vale. The claimed transport links between Kensington and the west are also overblown.

To put Flemington and Kensington in different electorates makes no sense. To remove both from Melbourne, but put one in Gellibrand and the other in Maribyrnong, as the Labor proposal does, seems bizarre. It makes far more sense to shift Docklands into Melbourne Ports, to unite communities of interest within Docklands and Southbank, and to absorb future urban growth around the Port region that will continue to occur in Port Melbourne and Fisherman's Bend into an otherwise moderately growing seat in Melbourne Ports, rather than have to drastically adjust Melbourne's boundaries again in the near future.

Likewise, the Liberal Party's inclusion of Alphington in Wills is bewildering. The part of Alphington in Yarra has connections with Batman primarily and Melbourne and even Jagajaga to some extent, but nothing at all to link it to Brunswick or Coburg.

The committee will note that the details of the Labor submission show the majority of Gowanbrae and Glenroy west of the Craigieburn train line also go into Calwell as we recommended in the Australian Greens submission (Pg 26). However if this is done simultaneously with removing sections of Fitzroy North and Brunswick East then Wills would be under quota. We recommend going with the detailed removal of those section of North West Moreland as shown in both the Australian Greens and the details of Labor's submission.

### **South-East**

In many parts of the state there are multiple options for divisions that all appear to us to have merit, while in some no possibilities appear satisfactory. However, in the outer south-east, there are two moves for which the arguments seem overwhelming to us.

The shift of Bass Coast into McMillan, combined with the removal of Pakenham, appears to solve multiple problems, making McMillan, La Trobe and Flinders all far more cohesive seats than they are today. Residents of Phillip Island have strong connections with Wonthaggi. It's where most of the children go to high school, where shopping is done and health services are based. We note that most independent submissions agree. The Liberal Party

submission, on the other hand, keeps this area in Flinders, leaving the residents of the island and San Remo almost entirely isolated from the rest of their electorate.

The removal of Bass Coast, and a likewise logical shift of southern Cranbourne to Holt means Flinders requires extra electors to compensate. The obvious solution, on which we and several of the independent submissions agree, is to add Mornington from Dunkley. The Labor submission has puzzlingly gone half way with this, a shift which makes no sense to us. Mornington is the major service centre and regional hub for the peninsula, a fact the Liberal submission notes and then illogically addresses by keeping it divided from most of the areas it services. Splitting it in two appears to serve no purpose, and is unnecessary to meet the numbers requirements. Moreover, this provides the opportunity to use the green wedge as the boundary between Dunkley and Flinders, a strong demarcation of communities of interest.

### **The Western Suburbs**

We accept that there is no easy way to partition Melbourne's western suburbs based on current population, and we acknowledge our own submission may not be perfect. The problem is that the City of Wyndham has a strong community of interest, but is too large for a single electorate. Nevertheless, the fact that there is no ideal solution does not mean that all options are equally bad.

We submit that the Labor proposal in this regard is particularly inappropriate, including as it creates the new electorate of Fraser in a way as to resemble the shape the South Essex state senate district of Massachusetts, from which the term gerrymander got its name.

As mentioned at the beginning of this document this elongated, strangely shaped seat is more a consequence of Labor's radical proposals elsewhere than a logical, justifiable implementation of the statutory criteria. If for example, the proposed changes to Melbourne did not force so many electors into Gellibrand and Maribyrnong one of the drivers for the creation of this bizarre looking seat would be removed.

### **Northern Suburbs**

We are deeply puzzled by the Liberal Party's proposal to keep the name of Murray, but apply it to an electorate that is much closer to the coast than to the river of that name. However, the proposed boundaries of that electorate make for a cohesive electorate. Unfortunately, this appears to be the only one of the Liberal Party's northern suburbs electorates that does not have some ungainly section tacked on where it does not belong. While our own submission has a few odd promontories, these are generally a function of our keeping SA1s together for enrollment calculation purposes, and could easily be addressed by splitting SA1s along natural boundaries. That's not the case for the, frequently larger, additions the Liberals have made to electorates in this area.

### **Northern/Western Victoria**

Most submissions for this area appear to us to have some merit, although Labor's inclusion of the area north of the Little Desert National Park in Wannon is an odd, but easily rectified, exception. A much larger outlier is the Liberal Party proposal for the seat of Indi. Even if one assumes that the 24,769 projected electors they propose to take from Bruce are meant to be

from neighbouring Murray, the suggestion seems to have no merit at all, other than to introduce as many voters as possible who are unfamiliar with the sitting independent member.

**Stephen Luntz**  
**Australian Greens Victoria**