

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

**PUBLIC INQUIRY OF THE AUGMENTED ELECTORAL COMMISSION
FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**IN-PERSON INQUIRY HELD IN SYDNEY
WEDNESDAY 14 AUGUST 2024**

RECORDED AND TRANSCRIBED BY EPIQ

**ONLINE INQUIRY
WEDNESDAY 21 AUGUST 2024**

RECORDED AND TRANSCRIBED BY LEGAL TRANSCRIPTS

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

PUBLIC INQUIRY OF THE AUGMENTED ELECTORAL
COMMISSION FOR NEW SOUTH WALES

HELD AT THE SMITH ROOM, WESLEY CONFERENCE CENTRE,
220 PITT STREET, SYDNEY, NSW

ON WEDNESDAY 14 AUGUST 2024

Before:

The Hon. Susan Kenny AM KC
(Chairperson of the Australian Electoral Commission)

Mr Tom Rogers
(Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral
Commission)

Ms Rebecca Main
(Australian Electoral Officer for New South Wales)

Mrs Narelle Underwood
(Surveyor General of New South Wales)

Mr Bola Oyetunji
(Auditor-General for New South Wales)

1 CHAIR: Good morning, everyone. Could I have your
2 attention. Welcome to this hearing of the augmented
3 Electoral Commission for New South Wales. I'd like to
4 begin by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the
5 land on which we meet today and pay my respects to their
6 Elders both past and present. Let me introduce myself. I
7 am Susan Kenny, and the chair-person of this augmented
8 Electoral Commission.

9
10 The other members of the Electoral Commission are
11 Dr David Gruen, the Australian Statistician, who is unable
12 to participate today; Mr Tom Rogers on my left, who is the
13 Commissioner; and the other members who make up the
14 augmented Electoral Commission are Mr Bola Oyetunji, the
15 Auditor-General for NSW on my right; and Ms Rebecca Main,
16 the Australian Electoral Officer for New South Wales
17 further to my right; and to my left is Mrs Narelle
18 Underwood, the Surveyor General of NSW.

19
20 Now, Part IV of the Commonwealth Electoral Act of 1918
21 sets out what we must do in relation to Federal
22 redistributions. This redistribution is required by law
23 because New South Wales' entitlement to members of the
24 House of Representatives has decreased from 47 to 46. In
25 accordance with section 66 of the Electoral Act, the
26 Redistribution Committee for New South Wales prepared a
27 proposal for the redistribution of the State into 46
28 Federal electoral divisions. That proposal, together with
29 some written reasons required by section 67 of the
30 Electoral Act, was released by the Committee on 14 June
31 this year.

32
33 In accordance with section 68 of the Act, interested
34 individuals and organisations were invited to make written
35 objections to this proposed redistribution and to provide
36 written comments on those objections. A total of 738
37 objections and 235 comments on objections were received
38 within the required time frame.

39
40 Now, the augmented Electoral Commission, that is, all
41 of us sitting here now, are required by subsection 72(1) of
42 the Electoral Act to consider all objections in relation to
43 the redistribution proposal and all comments on objections.
44 The inquiry today provides the opportunity for members of
45 the public to make submissions about those objections.
46 Now, as you're probably aware, the Electoral Act specifies
47 how the redistribution process is conducted and which

1 factors are to be taken into account. Subsection 73(4) of
2 the Electoral Act states that the primary consideration for
3 the augmented Electoral Commission is that each electoral
4 division meet certain numerical requirements. That is, the
5 redistribution quota and the projected enrolment quota,
6 subject to accepted tolerances or ranges around those with
7 two quotas.

8
9 Subject to an electoral division or proposed electoral
10 division satisfying those two numbers, subsection 73(4)
11 also requires that we have regard to communities of
12 interest within electoral divisions. This includes
13 economic, social, regional interests. We also need to have
14 regard to communication and means of travel within
15 electoral divisions and physical features and the area of
16 electoral divisions. The boundaries of existing electoral
17 divisions are also considered but are subordinate to other
18 factors because, of course, borders may change and we are
19 in the process of a redistribution, and often there has to
20 be compensating adjustments to boundaries to make sure the
21 electoral divisions are within the required numerical
22 numbers or tolerances for those numbers.

23
24 Now, the inquiry today will be recorded. Transcripts
25 of proceedings will be made available as part of the
26 electoral commission's report, and will be on the AEC
27 website once the report has been tabled in Parliament.

28
29 Now, I'd like to draw your attention to the fact that
30 we may have members of the media present at times during
31 the day. They will be asked to focus on ensuring there is
32 an opportunity for speakers to have their say and for
33 proceedings to run smoothly. Should the media have a
34 question, if they are here at this point, I would ask that
35 they speak to the person currently waving their hand, and
36 that any discussion take place outside the hearing room.

37
38 If there is an emergency, emergency exits and
39 stairwells are located on the opposite ends of the room.
40 In the case of a fire alarm, please wait for instructions
41 from Wesley Centre staff. And please do not use the lift
42 unless directed to do so. As a practical matter, we would
43 ask anyone making a submission to come to the lectern. The
44 lectern is fitted with a microphone, and we will hear you
45 better and so will the transcript provider. There is a
46 table in front of us, but it hasn't a fixed microphone, so
47 I would ask you to go to the lectern unless you are

1 mobility-affected, in which case of course the table is
2 there for your use, and you will have a microphone, much as
3 I have, probably subject to the same hazards.

4
5 Now, when you come to the lectern, please state your
6 name before you commence your submission. We will try and
7 remind you if you don't, but you will find it easier as
8 soon as you get up to say, "My name is," and then get into
9 your presentation.

10
11 The other thing that's important is that all those
12 present are able to make a submission if they wish. To
13 have this happen, we would ask you to keep your remarks to
14 no more than 5 minutes. A yellow card like that will be
15 shown at the 4-minute mark, and a pink card at the 5-minute
16 mark.

17
18 Now, subject to timing, there may be an opportunity to
19 provide further remarks once everyone has had a chance to
20 speak, so if you feel at the end of 5 minutes there's a
21 point you'd like to make, you might let the secretariat
22 know and we'll try and hear you before we go.

23
24 Now, if you haven't had an opportunity to register but
25 are here today and wish to speak or decide during the
26 course of listening to others that you would like to speak,
27 please make sure that the secretariat is aware that you
28 want to speak. What we will try to do is hear you at the
29 end of those that are registered. If it should happen that
30 we can't hear you today, because there's no guarantee we
31 will hear you at the end, we might run out of time, if that
32 should happen, we will still make sure that we do hear you
33 but it will be by electronic means. It will be online.
34 But everyone will be heard.

35
36 There is another thing I wanted to say to you, and
37 that is please don't read out any objections or comments on
38 objections, because we have read them already thoroughly.

39
40 The other thing I wanted to say was this week is a
41 Parliamentary sitting, and the augmented commission
42 recognises that it presents difficulties for some Federal
43 MPs who would like to speak. In this circumstance, we have
44 offered video conferencing for a limited number. The
45 maximum speaking time for them is also 5 minutes.

46
47 Now, after - one further matter that I will say is as

1 usual in this kind of inquiry, we will listen to you
2 carefully and we will not interrupt, unless of course we
3 can't hear, in which case we will let you know. After the
4 inquiry, we will deliberate on what we have heard and
5 received, and endeavour to make a public announcement as
6 soon as we are able.
7

8 The time has come to call the first speaker, and the
9 first speaker I would invite to come to the lectern is
10 Rowena Dillon.

11
12 <ROWENA DILLON

13
14 MS DILLON: Good morning, augmented Electoral Commission
15 panel. I am very honoured to be here. My name is Rowena
16 Mary Dillon. I am actually here as an individual, here
17 also as the president of the Newport Chamber of Commerce,
18 and as a candidate for the independent team, the Northern
19 Beaches independent team for Pittwater for the upcoming
20 council election.
21

22 So I am here to support the current redistribution
23 proposal for Mackellar and oppose the objections 671 and
24 686 in respect to Mackellar. I say this, and this is based
25 on the grounds that the business communities of interest on
26 the Northern Beaches and St Ives are two totally separate
27 business regions. They have differing community needs and
28 they also have different communities. In fact, us on the
29 Northern Beaches in particular, we are completely different
30 to St Ives, for Pittwater particularly. The various
31 business chambers on the beaches are also linked through
32 their LGAs, and St Ives is linked directly with Ku-ring-gai
33 and its Ku-ring-gai. So the business chambers of the
34 Northern Beaches are all linked through our council as
35 well, and support each other without place-making support
36 through counselling.
37

38 May I remind you, although we are on a rainy day
39 today, we aspire to, on the Northern Beaches, shop local
40 and support local and dine local. We have small villages
41 with very small retail businesses that focus on the
42 community supporting local. The people of St Ives don't
43 shop in Mona Vale, Newport, Avalon, Warriewood, Collaroy.
44 So, the people of Newport, Avalon, Collaroy and Mona Vale
45 shop in Mona Vale, Collaroy, Newport and Avalon.
46

47 We also are distinctly different in demographic.

1 Without sounding like it would happen today, because it's a
2 very rainy day, but it's not a rare - you actually - we
3 go - sometimes we go shopping in our swimmers and our
4 towels and with no shoes. In St Ives, I would deem that
5 totally inappropriate. Therefore, the demographic is very,
6 very totally different. The natures of the communities are
7 very, very different.

8
9 St Ives is part of the Ku-ring-gai Chamber of Commerce
10 that includes Gordon, Hornsby, Killara, Lindfield,
11 Turramurra, Wahroonga, Pymble, Waitara, Warriewood and
12 Thornleigh. These suburbs, as a demographic and from a
13 foliage kind of perspective of their treescape, is entirely
14 different from Terrey Hills onwards right through to Palm
15 Beach and across the front of the Northern Beaches, with
16 different people with different needs and different
17 communities and smaller communities, and that is why I
18 actually oppose the objection in respect to 671 and 686 in
19 respect to Mackellar. Let's keep Mackellar beautiful.

20 Thank you.

21
22 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is
23 Sam Ngai.

24
25 <SAM NGAI

26
27 SPEAKER: My name is Sam Ngai, and I am the mayor of
28 Ku-ring-gai Council, which starts from Roseville in the
29 south to Wahroonga in the north, from West Pymble in the
30 west to St Ives in the east. I've been a resident of these
31 suburbs for the last 37 years and attended schools in
32 Roseville and St Ives. I've also been a resident of the
33 electorate of Bradfield for these last 37 years, and it's a
34 great community.

35
36 One thing that really defines us as a community is our
37 proximity to both the Pacific Highway and the North Shore
38 train line, which serves as our connection to the outside
39 world. Whether we live right on the transport line in
40 suburbs like Lindfield, Gordon or Wahroonga, or whether we
41 live on the outskirts, like East Lindfield, West Pymble or
42 St Ives Chase, we always flock to the North Shore line to
43 connect to the outside world.

44
45 Geographically, our community is also defined by the
46 Lane Cove National Park to the west, which separates us
47 from Bennelong and Ryde Council, as well as the Garigal

1 National Park to the east, which separates us from the
2 Northern Beaches Council and Mackellar. The geographic
3 features physically and psychologically separate us from
4 the residents and shops of the other electorates.

5
6 When I speak to the residents in St Ives, their
7 connection is with the North Shore line and its nearby
8 suburbs. They will go to Pymble, Gordon, Killara and
9 Turramurra to park their cars and commute to work or
10 weekend activities. They will also flock to our town
11 centres along the North Shore line for goods and services
12 and community events. St Ives residents consider
13 themselves part of the North Shore and have little
14 connection with the Northern Beaches, and to seek Federal
15 representation they aren't going to travel all the way to
16 Narrabeen. They would rather keep it local.

17
18 If you look at our local community service
19 organisations such as Rotary and Lions, they also have a
20 strong history together. The Rotary club of St Ives
21 regularly supports other Rotary clubs or Ku-ring-gai,
22 Turramurra, Wahroonga and Chatswood on jointly run events
23 such as the Bobbin Head Cycle Classic, Wahroonga Village
24 Fair and the Lindfield Fun Run. I have never heard of them
25 jointly running events with Rotary clubs from beyond the
26 geographic divide. Likewise, when I assist the St Ives
27 Lions club with their youth of the year program, the
28 students who apply are ones within east and west geographic
29 boundaries. They are from North Turramurra, Wahroonga,
30 Killara and Roseville. We don't have applicants from the
31 Northern Beaches.

32
33 When you look at social media, St Ives has a strong
34 connection to our local Ku-ring-gai and Bradfield suburbs.
35 We have the St Ives community page, as well as the Gordon,
36 Killara and St Ives community group, and when you look at
37 the posts, they all relate to activities and events that
38 occur in the Ku-ring-gai LGA and Bradfield electorate.
39 They hardly mention the Northern Beaches or Mackellar at
40 all. At Bradfield, we embrace our connection to the world
41 via the North Shore line, whereas those people in the
42 Northern Beaches and Mackellar are a completely different
43 tribe. They value their seclusion and geographic
44 inaccessibility from the rest of Sydney.

45
46 As mayor, I also see the benefits of having LGAs that
47 align with State and Federal seats where possible. When it

1 comes to resident queries, I often receive questions that
2 relate to Federal matters and I will refer them to the
3 Member for Bradfield, but unfortunately with State matters
4 I have to check the resident's address to confirm whether
5 they are the 85 per cent that belong to Davidson or whether
6 they should go to Wahroonga. I also appreciate the AEC's
7 proposed redistribution, because when it comes to the North
8 Shore, it respects LGA boundaries and makes a lot of sense.
9 The Federal Member for Bradfield no longer has to spread
10 himself across three different LGAs for citizenship
11 ceremonies, ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day and community
12 events. Instead, he dedicates his time to representing the
13 people of Willoughby and Ku-ring-gai. Meanwhile, the
14 suburbs of Asquith and Waitara rejoins their other Hornsby
15 council communities in the seat of Berowra.

16
17 The AEC's proposal also means that the Federal member
18 for Mackellar can focus her efforts on the Northern Beaches
19 Council without having to traverse the geographic divide
20 for events with Ku-ring-gai and the forgotten people of
21 St Ives. Further south, the AEC's proposal also largely
22 aligns with LGA boundaries, and that makes it much simpler
23 for pre-established community groups to know that if they
24 belong to the same LGA, they also belong to the same
25 Federal electorate.

26
27 Thank you for listening to me. As mayor, I care
28 deeply for our community, including the residents of
29 St Ives, and I know that they would like to be represented
30 by someone who lives and breathes the North Shore.

31
32 CHAIR: Thank you very much. The next speaker will be
33 Mr Roderick Simpson.

34
35 <RODERICK SIMPSON

36
37 MR SIMPSON: Good morning. Thank you very much for the
38 opportunity to speak. Roderick Simpson is my name. For
39 the record, I was the instigator of the Voices of North
40 Sydney community group, whose focus is on participation in
41 our democracy. I'd just like to stress that it's a
42 nonpartisan group. It's actually interested in the
43 processes of democracy, and at this point I would like to
44 really commend this process, because it really is exemplary
45 and I think in Australia we really do benefit from such
46 open processes, which are transparent and thorough, with a
47 number of rounds. So it's clearly an exemplary process.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47

I made a suggestion. I did not make an objection because I missed the deadline, I'm afraid, thinking it was midnight rather than 6. But what I'd like to say is that my original suggestion was to do with two things, primarily. One was to do with the community of interest, and I think we have heard from the previous speakers just how important that is to many of us. I'm in the electorate of North Sydney, and I would like to recognise that the proposal does actually now align with the local government areas which we are concerned with in North Sydney.

However, the second part of my suggestion was to do with, actually, a commentary on the population projections. It's unfortunate that we don't have a little projector or something to be able to project numbers, so if you'll bear with me, I do apologise. But the important thing here is to recognise that the projections of population that come from the Australian Bureau of Statistics do not really represent what's happening on the ground in terms of development. Within State Government, there is a set of population figures which are called the "common planning assumptions", which are the result of various agencies coming together, including Planning primarily, to look at what the anticipated increase in dwelling numbers will be in five-year increments in particular, but also longer term, in terms of 10 years. Those figures are readily available, they're on the Planning portal, and those figures are quite at odds or quite different, I should say, to the figures that are on page 20 of the report. You may say that this is fiddling around the edges with some detailed numbers. However, the figures are quite significant.

For example, on page 20 it does say that there is an anticipated very small reduction in population and that therefore there is actually a significant shortfall in terms of the quota, in terms of electors in relationship to the expected quota. In fact, it talks about a 13 per cent - in 2029, being 13 per cent less than the quota, on the basis that there will be a 0.06 per cent - this is what I was saying about very detailed figures - 0.06 per cent reduction in the population of electors.

In contrast, if we take the Department of Planning figures from a little while ago, which do not include the more recent policy changes to do with what's referred to as

1 the transport oriented development proposals for
2 intensification around railway stations, so putting that
3 aside, but simply the current common planning assumptions
4 that the State Government is planning to, it would seem to
5 me, and this is where the figures get dicey, but it's quite
6 difficult to take the figures, and I think we shouldn't be
7 too obsessed, however we're talking not orders of magnitude
8 here, but a significant amount, where I would say there's
9 actually going to be a 12 per cent increase as opposed to a
10 0.06 per cent decrease in the number of electors, and
11 therefore, there would be a 3 per cent shortfall in terms
12 of the quota, rather than a 13.16 per cent shortfall, which
13 is actually in the report on page 20.

14
15 So, as I say, the thing that's important here is to
16 recognise that there should be, and could be, a greater
17 coordination of figures in population projections, based
18 not simply on projections, I would stress, but actually
19 what's happening on the ground. So, for example, there
20 will be an additional 6,000 people around St Leonards
21 railway station in the next five years, and those figures
22 do not seem to be picked up in the ABS figures, because of
23 the way that the ABS figures are projected on demographic
24 trends primarily, then they are rectified in terms of an
25 overall equilibrium model, essentially, with the State
26 Government in consultation, but then also remembering that
27 the State Government common planning assumptions do not
28 necessarily - even those don't really represent what's
29 actually happening on the ground in terms of the projected
30 investment.

31
32 So, in summary, I think it's likely that the
33 population of North Sydney will be quite close to the 2029
34 quota, and I think it would be great if that could be
35 looked into in a little bit more detail. Thank you very
36 much for your time.

37
38 CHAIR: Thank you very much, Mr Simpson. The next speaker
39 will be Caroline Gallagher.

40
41 <CAROLINE GALLAGHER:

42
43 MS GALLAGHER: Good morning, and thank you for letting me
44 address you today. My name is Caroline Gallagher, a mother
45 of three girls, and we have been lucky to live in Hunters
46 Hill for 19 years. I am co-responsible for the number of
47 objections and comment of objections you have received to

1 stop the abolishment of North Sydney. I am also the person
2 who started the Save North Sydney petition, which as of now
3 has about 2,500 signatures. More, actually. I attribute
4 my level of activeness to the fact that I have been part of
5 this North Sydney community. Being an engaged civilian is
6 contagious there.

7
8 I just want it recorded that I have done the above as
9 a volunteer, and also as an engaged and activated citizen
10 of my community. I have also personally paid for expenses
11 associated with this, too. I have not been compensated in
12 any way.

13
14 I am standing here before you today not because I am
15 against the New South Wales redistribution of the
16 boundaries, as I can see that adjustments need to be made.
17 However, I respectfully believe that the source of your
18 data does not accurately project North Sydney population
19 numbers. I am referencing objection 720, objection 719,
20 and comment on objection 212. And, importantly, I also
21 believe that saving our seat is really worth the additional
22 work and effort that will need to be undertaken to find an
23 appropriate alternative. That said, objection 686 does
24 present a good solution with an outcome that has fewer
25 negative impacts on communities and electors, and I
26 strongly endorse it.

27
28 I am standing here because, aside from the many other
29 reasons North Sydney should be saved, I feel it should be
30 said that keeping North Sydney is important for our
31 democracy, as it does democracy very well. North Sydney is
32 unique in the sense that we are a community of highly
33 engaged individuals, who not once but twice have banded
34 together to elect independent members of parliament.

35
36 We are progressive and inclusive, as we overwhelmingly
37 voted for marriage equality and said yes to the Voice. We
38 have fought to preserve parks, trees, we have fought
39 against various council amalgamations, we have fought to
40 keep historic sites and many, many more. We are activated
41 and connected because we take our civic duty seriously and
42 want our electorate and nation to be influenced by
43 high-quality and independent political representatives in
44 our Federal but also in our local and State seats.

45
46 This was all achieved by actively engaging in
47 respectful and constructive conversations with our fellow

1 constituents, and thus creating an incredible and wide
2 network of people with common interests and values
3 throughout our electorate. This sets us apart, as it
4 requires a strength and community spirit not commonly seen
5 in many other electorates. Hence, great and cohesive
6 communities like ours that generate incredible civic
7 participation should be kept intact.

8
9 On a personal note, I never thought I would be
10 community nor politically active, but it did happen. Just
11 by living in North Sydney and becoming friend with people
12 there, you start to care more and more. It's empowering,
13 and a real blessing. I am proud of the fact that my
14 daughters are way more politically and community aware than
15 I was at their age. This is good for my daughters, this is
16 good for my community, good for our country and our
17 democracy.

18
19 Australia is unique, as it is one of the few nations
20 to penalise people for not voting, which to me says
21 Australia does want politically engaged citizens. North
22 Sydney, being a highly engaged community, in particular
23 with politics, is therefore to be encouraged and
24 celebrated. I have read more than 250 of the submitted
25 objections, and my goodness, do you need any more evidence
26 how passionate we are, how interconnected we are, of our
27 spirit? If there was a single definition of what a
28 community of interest is, it is our community of North
29 Sydney.

30
31 In short, preserving engaged, cohesive, active
32 electoral communities like our North Sydney is crucial for
33 maintaining the strength and integrity of our democratic
34 system. This is a key reason for the continuation of North
35 Sydney as a Federal electorate, and it is in this spirit
36 that I ask the AEC, as one of our democracy's gatekeepers,
37 to find an alternative and not proceed with the abolishment
38 of North Sydney, as there are other and better options. To
39 lose it will be a great shame in a time when we need
40 communities and engagement more than ever. Thank you for
41 your time.

42
43 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next person is
44 Ben Raue.

45
46 <BEN RAUE:
47

1 MR RAUE: Thanks. Thanks for the opportunity to speak.
2 My name is Ben Raue, and I am an independent election
3 analyst and someone who writes about elections and analyses
4 redistributions. I don't normally make objections, but I
5 particularly had concerns about two electorates, and that
6 motivated me to want to make an objection. But here, I
7 kind of want to talk to some general principles that I
8 think relate to those two divisions, and those are the
9 divisions of Kingsford Smith and Hughes. And I have laid
10 out some numbers in my objection around, you know, it's a
11 requirement and it's a good requirement that electorates
12 need to be very similar in population, that we need to try
13 and ensure equal numbers of electors, and that means that
14 sometimes you need to draw constituencies and divisions
15 that cross over strong boundaries and include multiple
16 communities that don't have a very strong link between
17 them.

18
19 What I have been arguing here is where that is done,
20 I think it's preferable that both of those communities, or
21 all three of those communities if necessary, should all
22 have a substantial part of the electorate, and try and
23 avoid situations which I see in both the divisions of Cook
24 and Kingsford Smith where there is one predominant
25 community that makes up the vast majority of the electorate
26 and then a little bit hanging on of another one that's
27 quite separate.

28
29 So in the case of Cook, it is about 9 per cent of the
30 electors proposed live north of the Georges River, and I
31 think that's more problematic than under the old
32 boundaries, where it was 25 per cent. I think if you are a
33 sitting MP, if you are a community member who lives in that
34 area, it's harder to get attention. You are less likely to
35 be someone who, you know, is listened to. And particularly
36 in the case of Kingsford Smith, where less than 10 per cent
37 of the electors live on the south side of the airport. And
38 yeah, so that's the main principle that I wanted to
39 address, was that question around strong boundaries.

40
41 In the case of Kingsford Smith in particular, part of
42 the - you know, so the way Kingsford Smith has been drawn
43 is it's included this kind of thin strip of suburbs that
44 kind of go along the shore of Botany Bay and cut Barton off
45 from the waterfront, basically. Those areas are now
46 included in the same Local Government Area as a large part
47 of Kingsford Smith on the other side of the airport, but I

1 would argue while that is the case, I don't think that they
2 represent the same community of interest. They are very
3 distinct areas. It was a very controversial amalgamation,
4 and I would argue probably one of the less sensible ones.

5
6 There is a strong push within that community to have
7 those areas de-amalgamated, and while I'm someone who
8 supports larger council sizes, I think generally that
9 wasn't one that made a lot of sense. If you live in the
10 former Rockdale LGA and you want to go to the former Botany
11 Bay LGA, you basically have to leave the area or you have
12 to kind of run across the tarmac of Sydney Airport. They
13 are quite separate areas and I think if we were to draw
14 Kingsford Smith in that way, that community on the south
15 side of that airport would be disadvantaged.

16
17 To a lesser extent - so I have proposed instead for
18 Kingsford Smith that Kingsford Smith expands north into the
19 southern end of the City of Sydney, places like Rosebery,
20 Beaconsfield, I think maybe Alexandria. Those areas have a
21 much stronger connection. The division, the dividing line
22 between those communities in the areas already in Kingsford
23 Smith is not as strong a divide, it's a line that people
24 are much more likely to cross, and I think it makes sense,
25 and then you can have knock-on effects through Sydney and
26 Grayndler and so on.

27
28 And I also wanted to, as someone who is a former
29 resident of Campbelltown, my old high school is in the area
30 that's been moved into the seat of Hughes. I also wanted
31 to object to the inclusion of parts of the city of
32 Campbelltown in the Division of Hughes. I've drawn up one
33 proposed solution to that for Hughes. It's not my
34 favourite solution, but I think there are other ways to do
35 it, and in the case of Hughes as drawn, almost 60 per cent
36 of the electorate is in the Sutherland Shire and the rest
37 is split roughly evenly between Liverpool and Campbelltown,
38 and I argue that it would make more sense to include more
39 parts of the City of Liverpool and even parts of the
40 Bankstown area, the City of Canterbury-Bankstown rather
41 than those parts of Campbelltown. I think the transport
42 links between those areas are quite weak. And that would
43 produce a division that would be easier to represent, that
44 would make more sense, and that those communities would
45 have stronger connections. Thank you.

46
47 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is

1 Meredith King.

2

3 <MEREDITH KING:

4

5 MS KING: Thank you. My name is Meredith King, and I live
6 in the suburb of Milsons Point, which is part of the
7 electorate of North Sydney. I'd like to thank the
8 Committee for allowing me to speak against the proposed
9 redistribution of the Federal seat of North Sydney. In
10 addition to my submission, I'd like to support the current
11 Federal member's submission to retain the electorate of
12 North Sydney with adjusted boundaries, specifically because
13 it gets the balance right between reaching the target of
14 130,000 electors and keeping strong communities of interest
15 together.

16

17 It's on that point of keeping strong communities of
18 interest together that I'd like to make a couple of extra
19 comments around - I grew up on a property in northern
20 New South Wales and I've been coming down to this
21 particular region of Sydney all my life. This is where my
22 family and friends live and have always resided. So when I
23 decided to make the move back to Sydney in early 2023, I
24 wanted to be able to make the move to this particular
25 electorate because after all these years it still
26 represents the values and neighbourhood that have stood the
27 test of time.

28

29 I rent in Milsons Point, and I expect to continue to
30 be renting there for a significant amount of time to come,
31 and I count myself lucky to be able to afford to rent in a
32 lovely suburb like Milsons Point. However, as a renter in
33 an area that is slated to have a significant increase in
34 medium to high density housing, I'm concerned about having
35 the voice of renters diluted if our electorate is broken up
36 and absorbed into other regions where the rental
37 demographic isn't as high. We are currently going through
38 a period of rapid change that requires transition to more
39 efficient forms of energy. New dwellings are going to
40 require batteries and EV charging stations, to name a few
41 different things that need to happen, and we need our
42 Federal member, regardless of their political persuasion,
43 to fight for the rights of renters and to understand what a
44 just transition looks like for every member of society.

45

46 Within the Federal electorate of North Sydney, a
47 community of interest has understood that and intimately

1 understands what social justice looks like, including that
2 renters needs are taken into account. I'm concerned that
3 that genuine passion and concern for all members of
4 society, regardless of their economic status, is reduced
5 because of the realignment of those Federal boundaries, and
6 that the voice of community interest is reduced because
7 they are scattered and absorbed suddenly and quickly.

8
9 Since Federation, the Federal electorate of North
10 Sydney has embodied that essence of community of interest,
11 which has included public housing projects like the
12 Greenway flats in 1954, and with an in housing availability
13 projected for our electorate, which is a good thing, it is
14 critical now more than ever that our community of interest
15 continues to have a strong voice that advocates for the
16 rights of all.

17
18 Thank you for your time. I hope that you take into
19 account that the North Sydney community of interest has
20 been evolving and developing for since Federation, so for
21 close to 123 years. That takes time for those values to
22 develop and to be able to come to fruition, and that the
23 needs and concerns of all of its citizens are taken into
24 account, and we'd like that to continue for another 123
25 years. Thank you.

26
27 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker will
28 be Conor Magee.

29
30 <CONOR MAGEE:

31
32 MR MAGEE: Dear augmented Commission, thank you for
33 providing this opportunity to speak to you today on what is
34 a very important topic in relation to the draft New South
35 Wales electoral boundaries. I would like to discuss what I
36 believe is the most important concern to arise from this
37 draft boundaries, which is the boundaries for the division
38 of Kingsford Smith. This was the focus of my objection,
39 objection 723, and also my comment and objection, comment
40 and objection number 181. The Division of Kingsford
41 Smith --

42
43 CHAIR: Sorry, just before you go any further, could you
44 state your name?

45
46 MR MAGEE: Conor Magee. Sorry.

1 The Division of Kingsford Smith has always been a
2 division located north of Botany Bay and the Cooks River.
3 There is no justifiable reason for moving it south of the
4 Cooks River. It is not necessary to do so on numerical
5 grounds, and doing so does not strengthen community of
6 interest or any other links between different parts of the
7 electorate. In fact, due to the location of Sydney Airport
8 on the northern banks of the Cooks River, it weakens them
9 to the point of disenfranchising those voters located to
10 the south of Cooks River. It is my hope that the augmented
11 Commission will consider the over a dozen submissions that
12 deal with this in detail, particularly objection number 375
13 from Ben Raue, objection 421 from Darren McSweeney, and
14 objection 687 from Hilde Risseeuw.

15
16 But I won't go further into this well-discussed issue
17 today. What I believe is important is that the Commission
18 really considers what the appropriate boundaries for the
19 Division of Kingsford Smith is. If it isn't to go south of
20 the Cooks River, it then needs to gain territory north of
21 the Cooks River in order to actually meet that numerical
22 requirement. And I steadfastly believe that this is
23 entirely possible in numerical requirements. Now, the
24 existing boundary between Kingsford Smith and Wentworth has
25 been in the same location since 2006, and this
26 division/boundary is a compromise. It's a compromise to
27 ensure that the schools of Emmanuel and the Moriah War
28 Memorial College remain within the Division of Wentworth,
29 where the Jewish community of interest is located, and not
30 in Kingsford Smith. Now, this means that Stanley Street
31 through Randwick, which appears to be a small residential
32 street, is not in fact a random boundary, but is in fact a
33 carefully considered boundary that takes into account
34 community of interest that exist within the area and have
35 been defended by community members, including that local
36 Jewish community and a number of local MPs, previously
37 Malcolm Turnbull, and now the current local MP, Allegra
38 Spender, in her comment and objection 117.

39
40 Further east, Clovelly Road is a major road that
41 serves as a dividing point in this region between the
42 suburbs of Coogee and Clovelly. There has been much
43 commentary and a number of objections that moving the
44 boundary south to Alison Road would strengthen Clovelly as
45 a suburb within one division, but in fact Clovelly is
46 entirely located within the Division of Wentworth at
47 present. It would be Coogee that is split between

1 Wentworth and Kingsford Smith if the boundaries moved
2 south, and this splits a much - Coogee is a much larger
3 suburb, with much clearer communities of interest than
4 Clovelly is. Clovelly is a very small suburb, it doesn't
5 have its own post code, it shares a lot of services with
6 suburbs to the north. Coogee is its own distinct area.
7 And so, it would be a shame to split Coogee along Alison
8 Road, which in Coogee is a very small residential street.
9 It's not a state road like it is further west through
10 Randwick.

11
12 Now, of course it's also unnecessary from a numerical
13 perspective if Kingsford Smith is contained north of the
14 Cooks River, and it actually presents problems numerically
15 to push the Kingsford Smith border south, because it means
16 that Kingsford Smith has to find territory elsewhere and
17 would have to push further into the City of Sydney. Now,
18 from a numerical and geographical perspective, it's
19 actually my opinion that it would be ideal if Kingsford
20 Smith could be made up entirely within the Randwick and
21 former Botany Bay LGAS. Such an arrangement is advocated
22 by the Labor party in its comment of rejection 170, and I
23 would be supportive of the Commissioners taking this up as
24 an option. But I do accept that due to the community of
25 interest reasons that have been stated previously, which
26 led to the border that has been in place since 2006, that
27 this may be something that the Commissioners are not
28 willing to take up because there is that contention between
29 where that water should be, as has been raised.

30
31 Now, I do believe that the western border is really
32 strong between Kingsford Smith and Sydney, and crossing
33 Southern Cross Drive is problematic. However, that may
34 need to be the case. If that is the case, I would advocate
35 for Rosebery to be included in Kingsford Smith. It was
36 previously included between 2006 and 2012, and part of
37 Rosebery is already in Kingsford Smith. And it is quite
38 different to the remainder of City of Sydney. It has got
39 detached, low density housing, which is very distinct from
40 the high density Green Square area to its north and the
41 terraces in the western part of the City of Sydney LGA. So
42 I would really strongly advocate for the Division of
43 Wentworth to push north into Surry Hills and for Kingsford
44 Smith to include all of Coogee and perhaps Rosebery instead
45 of pushing south of the Cooks River into the
46 Brighton-Le-Sands area. Thank you.

47

1 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed, Mr Magee. Dr Robert
2 Coles is the next speaker.

3
4 <ROBERT COLES:

5
6 DR COLES: My name is Robert Coles. I am a resident of
7 Hunters Hill, which is within the North Sydney electorate.
8 I'd like to speak in regard to communities of interest and
9 I'd like to give an individual idea of why it's so
10 important to me that North Sydney remains as North Sydney.
11 My story starts with my mother and my grandmother. My
12 mother and grandmother moved to Lane Cove area just before
13 World War II. My parents were brides or were sweethearts
14 within the second world war. They got married straight
15 after the war, in St Giles at Greenwich, which is within
16 the area.

17
18 My father was a teacher. He taught at Lane Cove
19 Public School. They built a home on a greenfield site in
20 Riverview, where my parents lived for the next 70 years.
21 My mother only left after she was unable to look after
22 herself at home, when she was 94. My father died at the
23 age of 92, but in the meantime he came back to Lane Cove
24 and was the headmaster at the primary school. He, for many
25 years, presented the award for the music person at
26 Lane Cove Public School and it was named after him. My
27 mother died in the nursing home which was next to Lane Cove
28 Public School.

29
30 I was born at the Mater Hospital, which is in Crows
31 Nest. The obstetrician who delivered me was in fact early
32 on a GP in Lane Cove. She then became the first female
33 obstetrician in Australia. I went to Lane Cove Public
34 School. I was taught by a friend of my father's who was
35 there when he was a schoolteacher. My next-door neighbour
36 was my year 4 and 6 schoolteacher. The friends that I
37 developed at that time remain my friends. After primary
38 school, I went to North Sydney Technical High School, which
39 was opposite North Sydney station. My uncle, when he was
40 living in Lane Cove, he went to the same school. A teacher
41 that taught him was my science teacher.

42
43 That school land was sold and we went to North Sydney
44 Boys. North Sydney Boys at the time had 1,250 students and
45 I was one of 250 in year 12. When we played sport, it was
46 right across at North Sydney Oval. I watched Alan Border
47 score many centuries there when he played for his school.

1 I was fortunate to be the school captain the first 15, and
2 played many games there.

3
4 When I got injured, I went to North Shore Hospital to
5 get stitched up. When my father died, he was at North
6 Shore Hospital. When my wife recently got sick, we went to
7 North Shore Hospital. When we shop, we shop in
8 Gladesville, Lane Cove, and when we need something bigger,
9 we go to Chatswood. We do not go to Ryde, Top Ryde. When
10 my wife got sick, I wasn't going to Ryde Hospital.

11
12 Now, why is this important? Well, I believe it shows
13 the community of interest. I am a product of that school.
14 I am a product of the schools that are in that area.
15 I think in the paper yesterday it showed that North Sydney
16 Boys was the top state in the school in the HSC. North
17 Sydney Girls, where my sister went, was number 6. The top
18 comprehensive school was in fact Willoughby, which is again
19 in that area.

20
21 The proposed changes disrupt all of those community
22 aspects. They disrupt the transport systems which have
23 been set up. It's the people that really are, that make
24 North Sydney, North Sydney. I have been involved as a
25 volunteer, recently politically, and to me the spirit
26 within North Sydney has never been greater. I think the
27 destruction or dismantling of North Sydney would be an
28 absolutely inappropriate consequence of the redistribution
29 as proposed. Thank you very much for your time.

30
31 CHAIR: Thank you very much. The next speaker will be
32 Mark Crew.

33
34 <MARK CREW:

35
36 MR CREW: Commission, my name is Mark Crew. Thank you for
37 fitting me in. I know I wasn't on the main list. My
38 goodness, met another lad born at Mater Hospital.
39 Fantastic.

40
41 My family has grown up in the area. I'm going to
42 speak about general on-the-ground observations. I was a
43 Scout leader for 30 years. My wife was a teacher at Castle
44 Cove for 30 years. She taught students of her own
45 students. These people moved back into the area. Our
46 daughter has moved back into the area. I am now the
47 president of my local Progress Association at Castlecrag,

1 and so we have been reading about the TOD, "transport
2 orientated development", which I call "top down dictated".

3
4 Nonetheless, we are going to have an increase in
5 population in our area which I think fits the expectations
6 of the Commission in terms of the total number of voters.
7 I've tried to stay in touch with, and indeed do, many of my
8 ex-Scouts and young people I've known. I try and engage
9 them politically and get them motivated. Unfortunately,
10 it's not widespread. They are absorbed by so many other
11 interests and activities.

12
13 But by dismantling North Sydney, you're going to take
14 away one of those foundational rocks, building blocks, of
15 their community that we have tried to express amongst our
16 community. The people who spoke today are so better versed
17 on the nuances of the submissions that have been made. I'm
18 not trying to sway away from that, because they are
19 incredibly important, but it's the community feel, the
20 commitment to our electorate, and indeed my involvement
21 over a long time. I remember when Ted Mack got elected.

22
23 I think that's about all I can come up with at the
24 moment. I didn't come really well prepared. But thank you
25 very much for hearing us out.

26
27 CHAIR: That's much appreciated. Thank you. The next
28 speaker will be Mark Christensen. Mr Christensen?

29
30 <MARK CHRISTENSEN:

31
32 MR CHRISTENSEN: Yes, sorry. I am another person on the
33 waiting list, and I was sitting there just enjoying the
34 presentations.

35
36 So my name is Mark Christensen. I am grateful for the
37 opportunity to add additional information to my objection
38 to the abolition of North Sydney. Firstly, I'll try to
39 give you some reason about why I stand, perhaps not as much
40 detailed as previous speakers, but with as much heart and
41 as much sincerity. And secondly, I might try and sing you
42 a little song because you look as though you're getting
43 very bored - not really. I'll sing you a little stanza.
44 And then I then want to talk about community of interest,
45 predicting the future from the past, and institutions,
46 social institutions, within communities of interest.

1 So, what's my standing? Well, I'm a slow learner.
2 I've been to six publicly funded institutions. I did my
3 PhD outside of North Sydney. I did my masters of business
4 administration outside of North Sydney. I did my
5 undergraduate study at Macquarie University, getting
6 closer, whilst I was a resident of North Sydney, as a
7 division. I went to North Sydney Boys High, and great to
8 see other colleagues. I went to Castle Cove Public School
9 and I went to Castlecrag infants school.

10
11 Those six institutions are publicly funded
12 institutions. Five of them survive. The one that died,
13 and I feel like I'm talking to potential undertakers here,
14 because you are going to kill an electorate, but the one
15 that died was Castlecrag infants school. It died because
16 the government said, "There is not enough demand for
17 primary school education, for early age education, in
18 Castlecrag." I continue to live in Castlecrag. I live in
19 the house that I learned to walk in, and I am now in my
20 eighth decade on the face of the Earth.

21
22 Why was Castlecrag sold? Because of projection. A
23 projection from the past into the future. Who bought
24 Castlecrag school? A private school. So there we are.
25 There is not enough demand to continue to run a primary
26 school - an infants school, I should say - in Castlecrag.
27 Again, it was purchased by Glenaeon's school, which is a
28 private school. I see in the street that I live in
29 continuously the numbers of school kids that are going to
30 schools, in private schools, in cars. So I want to talk
31 about education later, but I'm afraid that time is going to
32 get away with me.

33
34 Let me talk about communities of interest. My concern
35 with this process is that you are driven by
36 representations, maps and ABS statistical reports. So I've
37 brought a book along with me. It's called "The Mighty
38 Bears!" It's a social history of North Sydney, written
39 around the rugby league club. And it has a map in it. You
40 can't see the map, but the map has - maybe you can make out
41 this line here. That line is the Warringah Freeway, and it
42 bifurcated the catchment area of North Sydney. North
43 Sydney as a rugby league institution drew from as far north
44 as Killarney Heights, as far south as Kirribilli - I don't
45 know why I'm dealing with the K's - over into Artarmon, The
46 Spit, Clontarf.

47

1 Now, the creation of the Warringah Freeway actually
2 was a problem because it split the community. The
3 community has recovered from that, and the community is
4 strong, vibrant, as other speakers have given you details
5 about. If it was to lose its electoral representation,
6 I think that it will be harmful, very, very harmful.
7 Whenever I try to engage my local member, it takes some
8 time to get access to that person. If I have an issue,
9 which I do have about public education, I'll have to engage
10 three local members to represent the schools of North
11 Sydney Boys High, North Sydney Girls, Willoughby, and then
12 to consider the private schools that are run up the North
13 Sydney line.

14
15 So I've run out of time. I would - less than one
16 minute left. I would ask you to take a lot of notice of
17 the projections of future population in the electorate,
18 because those numbers that you are working with are poor
19 predictors based on the past to the future. And you have
20 to remember we've just been through a 1 in 100 year event
21 and it's changed living conditions. We now have less
22 people per dwelling. We now have a different set of
23 circumstances, and for you to make a decision that would
24 change things dramatically for us would be a big problem.
25 I've run out of time, but thank you for the opportunity to
26 speak.

27
28 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. Next speaker is
29 Dr Philip Laird.

30
31 <PHILIP LAIRD:

32
33 DR LAIRD: Thank you very much for the invitation to
34 appear. I come from the City of Wollongong, and you might
35 ask why.

36
37 MR ROGERS: Could you just state your name for the
38 transcript?

39
40 MR LAIRD: My name is Phillip Laird, and my first question
41 is I hope you've got it right in that we have to lose a
42 seat in New South Wales. I simply cannot follow the logic
43 in your original report. You know, if it's going down from
44 151 to 150 members overall. So I hope you can address that
45 question in more detail in your final report.

46
47 Assuming that that is the case, and I question it,

1 that brings back to mind the situation in the Northern
2 Territory many years ago, whether it - should it have had
3 one or two Federal members. That was difficult, and I
4 appreciate that this is difficult. But North Sydney,
5 I think, needs another look at.

6
7 Why? Why North Sydney? Why should it be of relevance
8 to someone from Wollongong? Well, firstly, I had the
9 honour of working not for them or with them, but
10 interacting with the late Ted Mack. As the Lord Mayor of
11 Sydney, he and I stood on a ticket together to try and get
12 on the NRMA council in 1986. I had the honour of working
13 alongside him in State Parliament and I appeared before him
14 in a Federal committee, and his service was exemplary.

15
16 I regard the contribution of the current member as
17 significant, and I think we need more approaches,
18 community-led approaches, in our Parliament, and I
19 appreciate her taking on not only electoral matters, but
20 matters of wider significance, including reducing emissions
21 and in transport.

22
23 Now, the other question I have is that we say, "Right,
24 New South Wales hasn't grown as much as the rest of
25 Australia, so it has to lose a seat." But hang on, Greater
26 Sydney is growing faster than the rest of New South Wales.
27 So if you apply the logic, that, "New South Wales, you're
28 not growing fast enough so you have to lose a seat," and if
29 the rest of New South Wales is not growing as fast as
30 Sydney, then maybe a seat outside Greater Sydney should
31 have been looked at for dismantling and abolition.

32
33 And finally, it's not - you think of some of the
34 notable people who have lived in North Sydney. Sister Mary
35 MacKillop, Australia's only canonised saint. I mean, Billy
36 Hughes. You know? I mean, a Federal politician. He had
37 many different seats, but North Sydney was one of them.
38 And so my main point, though, is I think we may have
39 underestimated the impact of that metro, which hopefully
40 will open this month, as it was supposed to open. That
41 will put Chatswood within about 12 minutes of Martin Place.
42 I think you will probably see conversion of some
43 underutilised office buildings to residential apartments at
44 the time, and - do not underestimate the impact of that new
45 Sydney Metro. It's going to be very significant.

46
47 I don't think I can say anything more, except if you

1 do want to abolish something within the Greater Sydney
2 area, then I would support the suggestion or recommendation
3 of the present Member for North Sydney. Thank you very
4 much.

5
6 CHAIR: Thank you very much, Mr Laird. The next speaker
7 is Isobel Tyquin.

8
9 <ISOBEL TYQUIN:

10
11 MS TYQUIN: Hi. My name is Isobel Tyquin, and I would
12 like to speak to the proposed abolition of the seat of
13 North Sydney as well. And I'd like to talk about
14 communities of interest and representative democracy.

15
16 In early 2022 I joined a group of young people who
17 were frustrated by the lack of progress in representation
18 from our Federal MP at the time and wanted to make a
19 change. In the two and a half years since then, I have
20 become one of the leaders of this group and I have worked
21 with young people from Cremorne to Hunters Hill to advocate
22 for the interests of young people in our electorate, and
23 also for greater civic participation of young people.

24
25 I do think that representative democracy is incredibly
26 important, and the presence of communities of interest in
27 and across the current electorate of North Sydney have been
28 vital to the representation of North Sydney as a whole.
29 I think there's quite a strong community identity across
30 North Sydney, within its current boundaries, and I do think
31 North Sydney is a glowing example of what can be achieved
32 with good political representation. And by abolishing the
33 seat of North Sydney, it would dilute this representation
34 that has been achieved by tacking parts of this aligned
35 community onto separate parts of - onto quite different
36 parts of Sydney.

37
38 I live in Artarmon and I would become a constituent of
39 the electorate of Bradfield under the proposed changes. I
40 don't believe that Artarmon as an area has very much to do
41 with Hornsby or some of the Upper North Shore, where - and
42 to find good political representation, I don't feel can be
43 achieved. While it can be achieved with people with
44 different views, I don't think - I think it is more
45 effective when there is a strong sort of cultural and
46 community identity.

1 Yeah, I don't know. Yeah, I think that's it. Thank
2 you.

3
4 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is
5 Chris Quilkey.

6
7 <CHRIS QUILKEY:

8
9 MR QUILKEY: Good afternoon, Chair and inquiry members.
10 Thank you for this opportunity to address you. My name is
11 Chris Quilkey, and I am the deputy mayor of Blacktown. I
12 am a councillor in ward one of Blacktown LGA, which falls
13 entirely in Greenway, and I am here to speak about
14 Greenway. I might add I was born in North Sydney, I lived
15 in and I was raised in North Sydney and I am a diehard
16 Bears supporter. I live in the North Sydney diaspora,
17 which is everywhere else.

18
19 I wish to expand on my submission in respect to the
20 proposed addition of the Box Hill/Beaumont Hill subdivision
21 currently in the electorate of Mitchell to the electorate
22 of Greenway. It seems to me that this subdivision was
23 added as an afterthought following the proposed insertion
24 of part of McMahon into both Greenway and Chifley, for
25 whatever reason that I am not aware of.

26
27 In expanding McMahon across its northern border into
28 Greenway and Chifley, it seems to me that the boundary
29 drafters could not find a suitable natural boundary to
30 differentiate electorates until they came to the railway
31 line. This then left a hole in the number of electors in
32 Greenway that needed to be filled somehow. The proposal to
33 transfer electors from Mitchell to Greenway to do that is
34 in fact the tail wagging the dog. I submit that a
35 different natural boundary be found for the northern border
36 of McMahon, such as Bungaribee Road and Leabons Lane,
37 overcoming the need for additional voters into Greenway,
38 alternatively that the Box Hill/Beaumont subdivision be
39 removed and natural population growth be used to expand
40 elector numbers in Greenway.

41
42 In terms of the community interest, the subdivision of
43 Box Hills/Beaumont Hills falls in the Local Government Area
44 of Hills Shire Council, Federal electorate of Mitchell and
45 the State electorate of Castle Hill, formerly The Hills.
46 Now, I doubt that you could find any two neighbouring
47 councils that have more dissimilar communities of interest

1 politically than Blacktown City Council and The Hills Shire
2 Council. They are polar opposites. The same applies to
3 the corresponding Federal and State electorates. The Hills
4 Shire Council has four wards, each with three councillors,
5 plus a popularly elected mayor. Currently the break-up is
6 a conservative mayor, 10 conservative councillors and two
7 Labor councillors. And I use the word "conservative"
8 because the Liberals did not endorse any councillors for
9 the last election, although many of those supposed
10 independents are now standing as Liberals in the upcoming
11 council elections. Put another way, conservatives comprise
12 84.6 per cent of elected representatives and Labor 15.4.

13
14 Blacktown City Council has five wards, each with three
15 councillors, including the mayor elected by the councillors
16 from our number. For each of the past two councils on
17 which I have served, there were 10 Labour councillors,
18 66.7 per cent, and five Liberal councillors, 33.3 per cent.

19
20 The Federal electorate of Mitchell is described by
21 Wikipedia as the most conservative metropolitan electorate
22 and the second-most conservative electorate in Australia,
23 after the Division of Maranoa. In 2022, the current
24 Liberal member achieved 60.69 per cent of the two-party
25 preferred vote, versus 39.31 per cent for Labor. In
26 Greenway at the same election, the current Labor member
27 gained 61.53 per cent of the two-party preferred vote,
28 versus 38.47 per cent for the Liberal candidate. A polar
29 opposite.

30
31 In 2023 State elections in The Hills, the current
32 Liberal member achieved 60.9 per cent two-party preferred
33 versus 39.1 per cent Labor. The neighbouring State
34 electorate of Riverstone, which falls almost entirely
35 within Greenway at the same election, the Labor candidate
36 won 53.7 per cent two-party preferred, versus 46.3 for the
37 Liberal candidate. A substantial difference. Maybe not a
38 polar opposite, but still substantial. I submit that there
39 is virtually no community of interest politically on any
40 level between the two electorates.

41
42 In the past year, Blacktown City Council has conducted
43 12 citizenship ceremonies, each averaging 400 new citizens
44 plus one super-ceremony of 1,200 citizens, a total of
45 approximately 6,000 new citizens. Of these, approximately
46 two in three resided in Greenway and one in three resided
47 in Chifley. This means some 4,000 new citizen electors in

1 Greenway in one year alone. Bear in mind that the current
2 redistribution is based on the number of electors enrolled
3 on 9 August 2023. The Greenway population has already
4 increased by 4,000 from the pre-distribution total, less an
5 allowance for emigration and deaths. Extrapolating these
6 figures and assuming consistency in ceremony numbers, that
7 means some 12,000 new citizens and electors in Greenway
8 before the next election and the potential redistribution
9 in 2028. That is sufficient on its own to make up for the
10 proposed number of electors coming in from Box Hill and
11 Beaumont Hills.

12
13 I see I'm out of time. I have condensed my speech
14 notes. I would like to hand up my speech, if I may, and
15 there is a whole lot of data in it that would be boring to
16 read out.

17
18 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. Could you give that
19 paper to the member and secretariat. Thank you very much
20 indeed.

21
22 The next speaker will be Passang Kyipa. I apologise
23 if I've mispronounced that.

24
25 <PASSANG KYIPA:

26
27 MS KYIPA: Good afternoon, everyone. Firstly, I would like
28 to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on
29 which we are gathered here today, and I pay my respect to
30 Elders past, present and emerging.

31
32 My name is Passang Kyipa, the vice-president of
33 Tibetan Community of NSW Incorporated. Dee Why is the
34 centre of one of the largest Tibetan communities in
35 Australia, and I stand here to represent our community and
36 raise our interest of our community. The Tibetan community
37 has been established since 1990, and we have 11 committee
38 members who run the Committee. The Committee members elect
39 all the Committee members every two years and we all work
40 as volunteers. Our community previously made a written
41 submission to the AEC, comment 63. However, those comments
42 were made before the AEC's draft boundaries were published.

43
44 Now that our community has had time to consider the
45 AEC's draft boundaries for Mackellar and Warringah, I'm
46 here today to present additional comments to you. On
47 behalf of Tibetan community, we support the AEC's proposal

1 to unite community of Dee Why into the electorate of
2 Mackellar. Our community has a strong relationship with
3 Mackellar and beaches. It will be highly beneficial for
4 our community to be united under one MP. As we outlined in
5 our initial statement, comment 63, our Dee Why community is
6 currently split between two electorates, Warringah and
7 Mackellar.

8
9 As our community is run by the volunteers, it is very
10 difficult to coordinate with two Federal MPs. For meetings
11 and special events, this is a major obstacle for our
12 community. Dee Why has been joined with Mackellar
13 electorate, it will help our community to communicate,
14 raise our concerns effectively, and will help us to feel
15 that we are united and belong to one area rather than being
16 divided and we can't raise all our community members'
17 concerns effectively with our MPs.

18
19 Uniting Dee Why and Mackellar, forming one electorate,
20 would not only strengthen our bond as a community but also
21 amplify our collective voice. Since we submitted our
22 comments to AEC, we understand that others have proposed
23 parts of Dee Why should be moved to Warringah. Those
24 performances failed to link all of the Dee Why, as they
25 leave parts of the Dee Why community on the west side of
26 the Pittwater Road still separate from the rest of the
27 Dee Why. We are deeply concerned that those objections,
28 including 671 and 686, fail to unite our community. On
29 this basis, we oppose the proposal and hope that the AEC
30 will stand by its decision to allow our and Dee Why
31 community to be united with Mackellar. Thank you so much.

32
33 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is
34 Gareth Evans.

35
36 <GARETH EVANS:

37
38 MR EVANS: Good afternoon. My name is Gareth Evans, which
39 of course has political implications and political infamy,
40 some say. Notwithstanding, I am here, as you might not be
41 surprised to hear, to object to the dissolution of North
42 Sydney electorate. I understand the need for the
43 redistribution but object to dispensing with North Sydney
44 for two major reasons. One, you've heard a lot about the
45 history and I will not dwell on that too much other than to
46 say I think we dispense with our physical history too
47 readily, and indeed with our cultural history, and I think

1 it's - there are other ways of dealing with that. But the
2 main reason, as others have spoken, is the loss of
3 community.
4

5 I have been a 40-year resident of Lane Cove West,
6 and - in the same house, actually, which probably says a
7 lot about me. But I've also been on the P&C of local
8 schools and been a coach and manager of several junior
9 sporting clubs, including football, cricket, Little
10 Athletics and occasionally AFL. Now, the reason I mention
11 this is I think this brings a little bit of fresh evidence
12 to the thing, is because all our schools and all our
13 sporting clubs compete within the North Sydney area or
14 indeed further north.
15

16 Personally, I'm somewhat dismayed to find that the
17 proposal will push us westwards into Bennelong. We have a
18 natural physical boundary, western boundary to Lane Cove,
19 and that's the Lane Cove River. And quite frankly, even
20 though I walk alongside the Lane Cove River, we really have
21 very little reason to cross it for any particular means of
22 dealing with our daily lives. I've been to Parramatta
23 once, I think, in about a decade, and our new boundaries
24 will be out there.
25

26 What I'm saying is we have everything to do with the
27 Northern Sydney suburbs and nothing to do with the suburbs
28 west of the Lane Cove River. It's one of my pleasures in
29 life, to walk around having coached all these kids, as a
30 senior, to walk around our North Sydney suburbs and see the
31 parents and kids that I've coached, and that's lovely.
32 I wouldn't know a soul, I don't think, west of the Lane
33 Cove River in that regard.
34

35 We have a community MP in North Sydney, and not for
36 the first time, a true community MP. I think it shows that
37 North Sydney has in the past and currently shows the best
38 of democracy, that we have community representation.
39

40 The major objection I have is that a three-way split
41 completely destroys that community. Even a two-thirds
42 split would be better, but it will be far better in terms
43 of my experience in my 40 years at Lane Cove West, would be
44 to push the boundaries northwards, where we naturally are
45 drawn to. Thank you for your time. It's been a pleasure
46 to have the opportunity.
47

1 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is
2 Charlotte Bonnar.

3
4 <CHARLOTTE BONNAR:

5
6 MS BONNAR: Good morning. My name is Charlotte Bonnar.
7 I'm a resident of Mackellar. I have lived in Mackellar for
8 11 years and I also work in Mackellar. Before I start, I'd
9 like to thank the Australian Electoral Commission for the
10 work that's been undertaken to date in relation to this
11 enormous task of boundary redistribution for New South
12 Wales.

13
14 I have submitted comment COB118 in relation to
15 objections 82, 671 and 686. In my comments, I confirm my
16 support for the AEC's proposed draft boundary for
17 Mackellar. I believe that this proposal makes sense
18 geographically, socially and economically. I also note
19 that several objections and comments have been submitted
20 opposing the AEC's proposal, as referenced above, by people
21 living outside of the Mackellar electorate. I would like
22 to provide additional comments today to supplement what I
23 have already provided in writing.

24
25 So, firstly, I would like to talk a little bit about
26 communities of interest. I fully support the AEC's
27 proposal to reunite the communities of Frenchs Forest and
28 Dee Why into Mackellar. Specifically in relation to
29 Dee Why, I would just like to note that objections raised
30 by others do not acknowledge that the majority of Dee Why
31 is already within Mackellar. This includes Dee Why's
32 commercial centre and the beach. These same objections,
33 including 671 and 686, propose removing Dee Why, Frenchs
34 Forest and other southern suburbs from Mackellar and
35 replacing them with St Ives and St Ives Chase. Not only
36 would the expansion of Mackellar west to St Ives separate
37 the St Ives from the rest of its LGA, as we have already
38 heard this morning from mayor Sam Ngai, but it would result
39 in the St Ives electors becoming a significant minority in
40 an already geographically large electorate that's
41 Mackellar. So the St Ives community would become - account
42 for only around 10 per cent of the total Mackellar
43 electors.

44
45 And I note comments made by Ben Raue earlier today
46 about the issues associated with minorities from one local
47 authority area within large electorates in terms of

1 difficulties with equal representation from their MP. Of
2 the 47 current New South Wales Federal electorates, only
3 three have electors from two local government areas and
4 have more than 90 per cent of their electors in one LGA,
5 and these are Greenway, Newcastle and Grayndler.
6

7 I would next like to talk a little bit with about
8 economic factors and travel. So, St Ives is within the
9 Ku-ring-gai LGA. Page 19 of the Ku-ring-gai Retail and
10 Commercial Centres Strategy from August 2020 states that
11 the LGAs of Sydney, Ku-ring-gai, Willoughby, North Sydney
12 and Ryde are the workplace of almost 80 per cent of
13 Ku-ring-gai's working population. So 80 per cent of people
14 who live in the Ku-ring-gai Council area work within the
15 Upper North Shore area.
16

17 In addition, the strategy also indicates that
18 commercial and shopping activity in Ku-ring-gai is focused
19 within the Upper North Shore, not the Northern Beaches,
20 north and south along the transport corridors. And I think
21 this was also referenced by mayor Sam Ngai earlier, also.
22 It's only a short, 12-minute bus ride from St Ives to the
23 North Shore train line, with the quick links that that
24 provides to the large commercial centres of Hornsby,
25 Chatswood and of course the city.
26

27 It is unrealistic to believe that there is any
28 significant flow of commercial and economic activity
29 between St Ives and the rest of Mackellar in the Northern
30 Beaches. This isn't surprising, given the significant
31 natural barrier between St Ives and Mackellar that is the
32 Ku-ring-gai and Garigal national parks. Given this natural
33 barrier and the 17 kilometre distance between Mona Vale and
34 St Ives, it's also not surprising that active and public
35 transport between those two areas is far from ideal. The
36 Mona Vale Road West traffic and transport assessment of
37 2017 notes that the lack of active transport along this
38 road, that being Mona Vale Road West, is a reflection of
39 the challenging nature of the terrain.
40

41 Thank you, I've run out of time.
42

43 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is
44 Alison Hamill.
45

46 <ALISON HAMILL:
47

1 MS HAMILL: Good afternoon, Commissioners, and to
2 everybody else here in the room. My name is Alison Hamill.
3 Thank you for the opportunity to address you regarding the
4 Division of North Sydney. I also represent my husband
5 Derek Hamill, who can't attend. We have lived in North
6 Willoughby since 1998 and are voters in the electorate of
7 North Sydney, where we have many connections. I have never
8 been politically fired up, and certainly never imagined
9 myself presenting to this esteemed panel today, but voting
10 and volunteering in North Sydney has made me a political
11 animal - well, a pussycat at least.
12

13 So my motivation for presenting to you today is to
14 speak further to our objection number 707, and particularly
15 regarding North Sydney's passionate and community-spirited
16 heart. "Passion", "passionate", in our opinion these words
17 are overworked in the modern lexicon, so please excuse the
18 robust work-out I am about to give them in the remaining
19 minutes.
20

21 Regrettably though, many Australians aren't passionate
22 about their democratic privilege to vote. Sadly, much of
23 this laissez-faire attitude can be attributed to the lack
24 of community engagement by political parties. This is not
25 the case in North Sydney, where much of our community is
26 politically enfranchised. This is clearly demonstrated to
27 the AEC by the number and the passionate voice of
28 representations today, the large number of objections and
29 comments on objections lodged, and over 2,500 signatures on
30 our Save North Sydney petition.
31

32 I would like to share with you today some further
33 insights into North Sydney's impactful democracy. For
34 example, our Federal member and her team regularly engage
35 and consult with voters and provide them with information
36 so they can make informed decisions. A fine example is
37 last Thursday's ageing well seminar on death, dying and
38 grief, convened by the Federal Member for North Sydney,
39 which I, along with over 90 others from the area attended
40 and found extremely worthwhile. And the North Sydney
41 community updates, mailed to all constituents, are a
42 written testament to the seat's ongoing achievements for
43 our community. Just last Monday, I was part of a volunteer
44 working bee to pack and post another 1,000 welcome packs to
45 new voters in the electorate, one of many ongoing working
46 bees.
47

1 Lastly, but certainly not least, the immediate "Where
2 do I sign?" responses from North Sydney residents who were
3 canvassed during the Save North Sydney campaign, responses
4 which will stay with me always, especially those from
5 objection 564, page 27, Cremorne's adorable in-their-90s
6 Mr and Mrs Mansell, whose family have lived and owned
7 property and paid rates for over 100 years in North Sydney
8 and still live in the area. Or objection 562, page 57,
9 from 83-year-old Adrian from Lane Cove, who signed his
10 objection, then added "Leave the beep thing alone." Adrian
11 and I agreed to somewhat temper this more colourful
12 expletive for a milder "Leave the stuffing thing alone."
13

14 And this final scenario: dusk has fallen, I've run
15 out of Save North Sydney flyers after five hours of
16 letterboxing and decide to call it a day. Despondent at
17 only two objection signatures, I head homeward in my trusty
18 pavement pounders and cross the Warringah Freeway
19 overbridge at the top of West Street and Crows Nest. But
20 then I realise I'm heading the wrong way. I turn, and
21 above the roar of the traffic, speak with two residents who
22 don't think it at all strange that I've accosted them to
23 talk about the draft proposal to abolish the seat of North
24 Sydney, and happily sign objections.
25

26 My canvassing good fortune continues as I walk through
27 the populus in St Thomas Rest Park, where locals are making
28 their way home, picking up children from day care, walking
29 their dogs. And although they are all busy with their
30 everyday lives, five more still stop, listen and sign, all
31 in the space of 30 minutes. Happy days in volunteer land,
32 and as I sleep soundly that night, who would have thought a
33 necropolis could be such a lucrative cache of volunteer
34 support.
35

36 And I humbly pat myself on the back, because it was my
37 idea to provide a written submission, and this resulted in
38 300 objections. Such is the level of political engagement
39 in North Sydney.
40

41 In closing, Derek and I don't envy the AEC in its
42 impossible position of trying to equitably appease the
43 wishes of all voters. But equally, the instances cited
44 highlight the passionate - ding, there's that word again -
45 community spirit, and democracy in North Sydney doesn't get
46 any more real than this. To this, the people of North
47 Sydney respectfully ask the AEC to retain our founding

1 Federation seat and to allow its strong and independent
2 political heart to beat and flourish into the future.
3 Thank you very much for your time.

4
5 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is
6 Zoe Baker.

7
8 <ZOE BAKER:

9
10 MS BAKER: Good afternoon. Thank you. Before I begin, I'd
11 just like to acknowledge that we are here on Gadigal land
12 and pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

13
14 Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.
15 By way of background, I was born and bred in the North
16 Sydney Local Government Area, part of the greater North
17 Sydney federation seat. I was born there at the Mater
18 Hospital on the then Pacific Highway at Crows Nest, I was
19 educated at North Sydney Demonstration School, Neutral Bay
20 Public School and North Sydney Girls.

21
22 My mother first arrived in North Sydney in the late
23 9160s and is still, at 82, living there today. My family
24 has long and deep connection to this area. I speak to you
25 today, though, as a private citizen and resident of North
26 Sydney, but I think it's important that you understand that
27 since 2008 I have had the privilege of serving as a
28 councillor on North Sydney Council, and I am currently the
29 mayor, but I do not represent the views of North Sydney
30 Council formally today.

31
32 In short, I would like to strongly urge you to
33 reconsider the abolition of this historic Federation seat,
34 on the grounds that insufficient weight or consideration
35 has been given to the planned population growth of the
36 local government areas within the seat, and particularly as
37 that relates to State Government housing policies.

38
39 I will, by way of example, confine my remarks to the
40 North Sydney Local Government Area, but I can assure you
41 that those trends that I will be talking about today are
42 echoed across all of the local government areas within the
43 Federal seat, particularly Willoughby and Lane Cove. The
44 North Sydney Local Government Area is one of the three most
45 densely populated local government areas in the State of
46 New South Wales. At 10.49 square kilometres, there are
47 currently 72,000 residents. 89 per cent of the population

1 live in medium and high density dwellings.

2
3 Under council's existing plans, with no further
4 amendment by the State Government, we are planning for and
5 delivering an additional 19,500 population - that's
6 27 per cent above the existing population - by 2036.
7 Following the announcement of the metro project in July
8 2016, the State Government announced a plan to precinct for
9 Crows Nest and St Leonards, and ultimately that became what
10 is known as the 2036 Crows Nest St Leonards plan. Under
11 that plan, that precinct alone, which is a very small part
12 of the greater Federal seat, is to absorb and produce an
13 additional 6,683 new dwellings by 2036.

14
15 As of today, in the North Sydney Local Government
16 Area, and I am giving this to you to say this isn't just
17 plans, this is happening on the ground, there are 1,078 new
18 dwellings that have been approved under planning proposals
19 or are subject of development applications. In late May of
20 this year, the minister, state minister for planning,
21 announced new housing targets for the North Sydney Local
22 Government Area, in fact for 43 metropolitan councils. For
23 the North Sydney Local Government Area alone, and that's
24 not Willoughby or Lane Cove, also in the seat, 5,900
25 completed new homes - and that's a new planning piece of
26 jargon - but completed new homes by 2029.

27
28 And so, I cannot say to you more strongly that when I
29 read your draft decision, it just did not ring true for
30 what is happening on the ground in terms of planned and
31 future population growth. And on that basis, I think it is
32 exceptionally short-sighted that you would abolish the
33 seat, which with the sorts of growth levels that we're
34 talking about, and I cannot stress enough that the North
35 Sydney examples are just examples of one portion of this
36 seat - it is echoed in each of the other local government
37 areas - that you will be having to undertake another
38 distribution, I would say by 2029 at the latest, because
39 the population figures that are held by local and State
40 governments do not seem to have much relationship to those
41 that you based your decision on.

42
43 The second point, as a resident, that I must echo the
44 statements made by the previous speaker: the community of
45 interest within the Federal seat of North Sydney is a
46 special one. I'm sure every seat tells you this, but it is
47 particularly evident, for example, in 2016 as they were

1 planning that big new population growth at Crows Nest and
2 St Leonards, the State Government sought to abolish a
3 number of the local councils within the Federal seat of
4 North Sydney. North Sydney, Willoughby, Lane Cove, but
5 particularly North Sydney and Lane Cove councils, fought
6 the State Government and won.

7
8 And much of the basis of that decision and that
9 passionate fight was about retaining what was a special
10 community of interest. And so, I would repeat what I said
11 in my submission to you, which is that there is something
12 about - it is different, what is happening in the Northern
13 Beaches, which is separated by water, to what is happening
14 along the North Shore rail line part of this seat of North
15 Sydney. It is significantly different, and I would say
16 that, speaking as someone from the North Sydney Local
17 Government Area, there is a long and strong tradition of
18 independence.

19
20 And I will finish with a plea that when I told my
21 mother that I was coming to speak today, she said to me -
22 she, unfortunately, has COVID, and she said, "I would have
23 liked to have said to the panel that we have had, for most
24 of the history of the seat of the Federal seat of North
25 Sydney, we have had terrible duds as local members, and we
26 finally have a very engaged and energised local member who
27 is community-focused, and not just community-focused, she
28 is held up on the wings of a very engaged and active
29 population." And so, on that personal plea, I would ask
30 that you please do retain the Federal seat of North Sydney,
31 not least because on population alone I think you'll be
32 having to revisit it within the next five to 10 years.
33 Thank you for your time.

34
35 CHAIR: Thank you so much. The next person is Vivian
36 Bayl.

37
38 <VIVIAN BAYL:

39
40 DR BAYL: My name is Vivian Bayl, and I live in the North
41 Sydney electorate. I would like to thank the Committee
42 first of all for the opportunity to speak. I think it's a
43 wonderful opportunity. It shows democracy in action, so I
44 really support that.

45
46 I'm a new person coming into this electorate.
47 Originally, I moved here only 11 years ago, having lived in

1 Bennelong for 53 years. So I lived in Epping, brought up
2 my family and had a lot of links there, but never
3 experienced the sort of community that I have experienced
4 in the North Sydney electorate.

5
6 The character of Epping changed dramatically with the
7 opening of the metro line to Chatswood, which is around the
8 time that I actually moved from that area, because Epping
9 was changing so dramatically, with that change, because it
10 made that transport link, and as a result there was big
11 changes in the actual level of development, with much
12 high-rise. And anybody who travels through Epping on the
13 railway line these days will see all the towers around
14 Epping station, 24-storey towers.

15
16 The thing is I've noticed very much that accelerated
17 development where the metro line goes through. So it goes
18 to north western Sydney now, and we have to remember again,
19 as other people have mentioned, that the metro will open in
20 North Sydney, in the North Sydney electorate, within this
21 month, hopefully. There are stops in Crows Nest, in
22 Victoria Cross, which are North Sydney, and I think again
23 we are going to be seeing huge development.

24
25 I was very appreciative of the comments from the Mayor
26 of North Sydney, because I'm well aware that in Crows Nest
27 particularly there are requests to try and increase the
28 height development of the actual - what is currently
29 allowed by about another six storeys which will make it
30 much more attractive to developers to build around the
31 Crows Nest metro station.

32
33 That increase in height is basically waiting for
34 approvals, it needs to be gazetted, but we will actually
35 see a very much significant increase in population in that
36 area, as has been discussed by other people. We have to
37 remember of course that past performance does not indicate
38 future performance, as we are always told when looking at
39 businesses. And I think the same applies for population.
40 And I think what we know about the population and the
41 projections on population are already out of date. And I
42 think we need to be looking to the future and not relying
43 on what the past tells us.

44
45 My other major concern is that Crows Nest is being
46 split three ways. Crows Nest is going to become three
47 different electorates, and I will be - I am very concerned

1 that in fact, that puts each of those little corners of
2 Crows Nest into different electorates. And as a result,
3 they will be on the periphery of those electorates, and I
4 think we will have little chance of getting much interest
5 from the local members who will be based in places like
6 Manly, Bennelong and moving - just moving everyone around
7 to such an extent that they are no longer focused in the
8 Crows Nest area, which is a huge development area.

9
10 There is also the issue that Crows Nest is very much a
11 health hub. It has - again, they will end up in three
12 different areas. So we have the Mater Hospital, and some
13 people have spoken about that. And of course we have North
14 Shore and also the hospital, Greenwich Hospital, which is
15 actually a palliative care and rehab hospital. So that
16 will bring in three different electorates, and I think that
17 creates issues too, because many people have been involved
18 with one or other or combinations of those hospitals. Many
19 of the doctors live in the area. I am a doctor myself.
20 Many of the doctors also have rooms and so on in that area,
21 and it means that the cases they are working will be in
22 different electorates and will have different
23 responsibilities for their Federal members.

24
25 I would also like to just mention a couple of the
26 other objections that I would like to note. I support
27 particularly objections 729, 719 and 686, both of which, or
28 all of which are much more detailed than what I've got to
29 say and are very detailed to do with possible
30 redistribution.

31
32 The only thing I would add to that is moving the
33 northern boundary of North Sydney to Boundary Road
34 Chatswood instead of being Victoria Road Chatswood would
35 mean that Chatswood CBD would be reunited with North Beach
36 and with the rest of Chatswood, and I do think that's a
37 very logical boundary which has not really been considered.
38 Thank you for your time.

39
40 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. Donna Patterson is
41 the next speaker.

42
43 <DONNA PATTERSON:

44
45 MS PATERSON: Yes, I am Donna Patterson. Thank you very
46 much for the opportunity to speak today. I have lived and
47 worked for 27 years in the North Sydney electorate, to

1 which is what I am speaking today about the proposal to
2 abolish that. I have never been politically active in my
3 life until three years ago, when I recognised that we can't
4 take democracy for granted. And I knew I had to stand up
5 and pay attention and work with a community of people to
6 get change, and I have been doing that ever since.
7

8 I want to add to the objection I have already put in,
9 and I refer the Committee to objections 727, 720, 237 and
10 others, and I can see that North Sydney already has the
11 required numbers that you're looking for in the electorate,
12 and will have greater numbers next year and in the ensuing
13 years with already built residences, buildings that are in
14 progress, buildings approved, buildings required to be
15 built in the next five years by the State Government. The
16 numbers are all in those objections and you have been told
17 many of them already today. I concur with what's been
18 said, in particular splitting the business hub of Crows
19 Nest three ways will disenfranchise that burgeoning
20 community.
21

22 I support the proposal put forward in objection 727
23 regarding adjusting the boundaries to North Sydney as the
24 Lower North Shore electorate and extending it further
25 north. Indeed, as Dr Vivian just said, the only unusual
26 feature to me in the electorate, having lived there and
27 worked there, was the split in Chatswood along Victoria
28 Avenue, which just seemed illogical. I support the merged
29 Upper North Shore electorate involving much of Bradfield
30 and Berowra as a distinct residential community, connected
31 by the train line and the highway.
32

33 As I stated in my objection, there are significant
34 implications for communities of interest with the AEC's
35 proposal as it stands. I feel in a unique position to
36 comment, as I've lived and worked in the electorate for
37 27 years and have just recently moved to Warringah, and I
38 can tell you that the Lower North Shore is not the Northern
39 Beaches. People in the suburbs of the North Sydney
40 electorate feel they are part of the Lower North Shore, a
41 thriving inner city electorate, the third-largest business
42 district in Sydney, full of hospitals, full of schools,
43 organisations and sporting clubs and a multicultural hub.
44 I'm not sure how much that's been touched on before, but it
45 definitely is. My own children at their schools, with
46 surveys done of the enrolment, 60 per cent and more of
47 families were from non-English speaking backgrounds.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47

We're bounded by Sydney Harbour and the Lane Cove River has also been mentioned, and the electorate's spine, indeed their anchor, has always been the train line, soon to be two train lines, in parallel with the freeway and the Pacific Highway. I have lived this with my family. It was rare to ever go to Ryde or to go the Upper North Shore or to the Northern Beaches. I am a speech pathologist. I have worked in this electorate, in schools, in day care centres, medical allied health centres. I still play womens football for Chatswood under the Northern Suburbs Football Association. We play around North Sydney and only extend into the Bradfield electorate, not Bennelong and not the beaches. They are different competitions.

So in closing, I confirm my objection that I have registered, that North Sydney has the numbers now and into the future. There will be major impacts on community should the current proposal stand. I love our democracy. I love that we have an independent Electoral Commission. I know it's a challenging task that you all have, but I respectfully suggest that there's a better way. I stand with the detail proposed in objection 727, but I sincerely thank you for the opportunity of the process to stand here today. Thanks.

CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. Kyle Patterson is the next speaker.

<KYLE PATTERSON:

MR PATTERSON: Thank you, distinguished members of the panel for this opportunity to speak to you, and I wish you well in your deliberations, whichever way they go.

My name is Kyle Patterson, and I'm mad as hell, but I will play nice today, I promise. I am here to speak about my objection to the abolition of the North Sydney Federal electorate. I was among the hundred who started just about three years ago from scratch doorknocking, letterboxing, talking to strangers at railway stations, getting told, "You're wasting your time."

The election came, lo and behold, 50,000 people either cast a first number one vote for our candidate, or preferenced against the status quo to make sure she got across the line. 50,000 people. It was an idea whose time

1 had come. Climate change. Like many others, I was sick of
2 screaming at the TV. I was sick of the apathy and the
3 cynicism. And so guess what? I got out of the lounge
4 room, turned the TV off and got stuff done.

5
6 We are here today, I'm told, to convince you guys and
7 make a case for the strong community of interest in North
8 Sydney. Haven't we already done that? 50,000 people from
9 scratch voted for a candidate unknown to most of them for a
10 topic that was not talked about at dinner tables, because
11 people are too embarrassed to talk to their friends about
12 climate change in case there's a closet climate denialist
13 hiding there. We have a community of interest. What's at
14 stake now, the flourish of the election day was great, we
15 all had at the election night party, but it wasn't a
16 flourish that ended there. We have now the opportunity to
17 make North Sydney the electorate a template of what's going
18 forward, because of its characteristics. Lots of business,
19 lots of high-rise, high density living, lots of medium
20 density, lots of still normal suburbs, lots of health, lots
21 of schools. It's got everything. It's a little microcosm
22 of the changes Australia needs to make to get to a
23 transition to net zero.

24
25 What we have in the past is this: we had a local
26 member who was a lovely chap. I met him. He dealt with
27 the basics very well. He got up in the morning, he had a
28 shave, he put a blue suit on and he turned up on time. He
29 went to Canberra, having said to us on the side, whispered
30 sweet nothings in our ears about how concerned he was about
31 climate change. He would go to Canberra and vote with
32 Barnaby Joyce every single time, in my name. He would vote
33 for fossil fuels, he'd vote against climate change. And
34 he'd come back and say, "Sorry, that's how the system
35 works." We said sorry to him. I wish him well in the
36 future.

37
38 We can't go back cutting up this community which is
39 committed, progressive and engaged in building a net zero
40 in North Sydney as a template for the rest of Sydney and
41 Australia. We cannot go back to having those people
42 represented by guys in blue suits who whisper sweet
43 nothings in our ears and go to Canberra and vote for fossil
44 fuels. It cannot happen. That's why I'm angry, because I
45 lived through it. I lived for three decades in the
46 electorate. I live through the sweet nothings. "Yeah,
47 we'd love to something about it, but it's so hard, you

1 know? There's Barnaby. There's Barnaby."
2

3 We've heard so much about Barnaby. He's still there.
4 But what we have now is a voice in Canberra for this
5 community. And what we also have is a plan, a commitment.
6 For example, the laws coming up about fuel efficiency in
7 Australia were a pre-election promise by Kylea Tink. Yes,
8 the Labor government put it in place, but it was on the
9 agenda and she pushed hard. Good reason, because North
10 Sydney has over 200,000 cars going through it every day,
11 fossil fuel driven cars spewing out pollution from dirty
12 old fuel, because of the Harbour Bridge and the tunnel. We
13 accept that's part of what North Sydney's about.
14

15 We're now going to have fuel efficiency, so it's not
16 just a flourish of the election. The reason why that we've
17 got that law through is because the people behind Kylea
18 Tink are still engaged today. It would be a travesty to
19 cut this up. There is a community of interest. It's
20 powerful, it's strong. I'm sorry if I've let my emotions
21 go. All I can say is this: let North Sydney stay intact.
22 Let us put facts on the ground that will trump - and I use
23 that word carefully - will trump the fake news of the
24 climate denialists. Thank you.
25

26 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker will
27 be Gary Barnes and then we'll take another speaker by way
28 of video conference. Dr Barnes.
29

30 <GARY BARNES:

31
32 DR BARNES: Thank you. I'm a resident of Mosman. I'm a
33 retired doctor. I think that I agree with the last
34 speaker, that the community feeling in North Sydney and in
35 Warringah is extreme and important. I've become much more
36 interested in politics since I retired, mainly because of
37 what has been going on in the US and their faulty electoral
38 system. I have become much more aware of the importance of
39 the AEC in our system. I have been aware of the
40 disinformation register and the article in the Herald by
41 the Commissioner about his fears for the next election.
42 Because of that background, I am acutely aware of the
43 importance of the AEC and its impartiality.
44

45 I believe, though I am not certain, that the
46 redistribution process involves submissions by various
47 political parties. I think that is unfortunate, not

1 because I think the AEC has lacked impartiality, but that
2 it is important to be seen to be impartial. I don't think
3 I am the only one that has fears that we could be heading
4 down the US slippery slope. I think you have seen how much
5 the community feels about all this. Thank you.

6
7 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed.

8
9 When I said - what we propose to do now is take
10 5 minutes break, and then we'll come back and take the
11 video conference presentation at 1 o'clock.

12
13 SHORT ADJOURNMENT

14
15 CHAIR: All right, everyone. We are about to begin. We
16 are going to have a presentation from Kylea Tink MP.

17
18 <KYLEA TINK:

19
20 MS TINK: Thank you. Can you hear me okay?

21
22 CHAIR: Very well indeed, thank you.

23
24 MS TINK: Thank you. I want to start by acknowledging that
25 I'm joining you from Ngunnawal Country and pay my respects
26 to the Elders both here and on the lands of the community I
27 now represent, the Cammeraygal and the Wattamolla. I also
28 want to thank the Committee for the opportunity to speak to
29 this hearing today.

30
31 My testimony today follows the submission lodged in my
32 name, OB676, which responds to and builds on information in
33 the Commission's proposed redistribution report. That
34 submission provides detailed information on a number of
35 things, including projected population growth, communities
36 of interest, and importantly proposes an alternative
37 solution which meets both the AEC's requirements whilst
38 impacting a similar number of constituents across the
39 State.

40
41 The additional information I wish to provide today
42 then focuses on my personal reasons for rejecting the
43 current proposal and supports the broader actions my
44 community has taken as separate from me. Before I became
45 the Federal representative of the seat of North Sydney, I
46 was just another proud resident of the area. Politics was
47 not in my future. Rather, I was a mum with kids at schools

1 there, a sporting club participant with many hours spent
2 commuting to various locations for competitions, a friend
3 who enjoyed time across the community with a variety of
4 people, a community builder who established online groups
5 to share support babysitters and support local families, a
6 worker who eagerly engaged those around me to help build
7 the businesses and not-for-profits I was involved in, and a
8 business owner employing locals and supporting other
9 businesses and not-for-profits around the community.

10
11 Each of these roles brought me into contact with
12 different elements of what kinds of people who live in the
13 area currently geographically defined as the Federal seat
14 of North Sydney, and each helped build an incredibly strong
15 sense of belonging. When I think about the boundaries of
16 my day-to-day life, I would actually seldom leave the North
17 Sydney area. The area has now been home to my family for
18 over 18 years, and I can honestly say the experience of
19 returning over the Harbour Bridge and coming into the Lower
20 North Shore when I am headed home brings me joy. The news
21 of the possible abolition of our seat, then, when it came
22 was devastating. Not because of the potential impact it
23 has on my current employment, because of the impact it
24 would have on the fabric of the place I called home. At
25 the time, in my initial response, I made it clear: my
26 concern was then and continues to remain today for the
27 people who identify as being from this area and the
28 potential this boundary redistribution has to tear that
29 community apart.

30
31 In the days immediately following the draft
32 announcement, people from across my community reached out,
33 unprompted by me, in distress and with questions about what
34 they could do, and it's this truth that I want to share
35 with the Committee, for despite what some in the major
36 parties and media have said, the desire to fight to keep
37 the seat of North Sydney is something that has come from
38 the community, for the community. When you look closely,
39 this depth of commitment to the community is completely
40 understandable for a number of reasons. There is a deep
41 sense of a clear community of interest, there is a clear
42 sense of the specific nature of the area and its
43 surrounding natural, built and business environments, and
44 there is also a society very adept at embracing the rapidly
45 increasing population, where one in three people living in
46 our area speak a language other than English at home, and
47 the inflow of people more than offsets those leaving the

1 area, as single dwellings are knocked down to make way for
2 medium to high density housing.

3
4 Given that then, it was volunteers who came together
5 from across the community to work the numbers and identify
6 a reasonable alternative proposal, one that allows the AEC
7 to meet its obligations to reduce the total number of seats
8 within New South Wales by one, whilst also ensuring fewer
9 people are shifted across electoral lines. To be clear, I
10 sincerely wish the current boundaries for North Sydney did
11 not have to be altered, and I believe that if seen in
12 isolation, they would be left alone as our population is
13 growing at a much faster rate than currently predicted and
14 our common sense of belonging is very clear.

15
16 I also do not believe the people of Kirribilli have a
17 strong affinity with the people of Northern Beaches, nor do
18 the people of Lane Cove associate as being from Ryde or the
19 people of Willoughby see themselves as being from Gordon.
20 Indeed, our incredibly strong sense of community means that
21 many of those centres are, at least on the sporting field,
22 often our fiercest rivals. But, understanding an outcome
23 here is going to require compromise, I believe the
24 community of North Sydney has as in good faith, and without
25 the machinery that comes with a major party, presented an
26 elegant alternative solution that would ensure the economic
27 and social prosperity of this part of our country to
28 continue to build and contribute in a positive way to our
29 nationhood.

30
31 In closing, I would ask the Committee to accept the
32 objection made in my name, submission OB676, as offering a
33 solution that meets the demographic requirements of the
34 boundary redistribution, impacting fewer communities,
35 whilst also ensuring activated citizens are able to
36 continue to participate fully in their democracy. Thank
37 you.

38
39 CHAIR: Thank you so much for that. That's very helpful.

40
41 MS TINK: Thank you.

42
43 CHAIR: And the next speaker is here in person, I believe.
44 Mr Ben Wilson.

45
46 <BEN WILSON:
47

1 MR WILSON: Hello, my name is Ben Wilson. I would like to
2 thank the Committee for inviting the community to make
3 further comments on the redistribution, which I do today in
4 my private capacity as a former resident of Greenwich, a
5 current resident of Lane Cove North, and a resident of the
6 North Sydney electorate for 24 years.

7
8 The Committee has received my objection to the
9 abolition of North Sydney and the reasons for it. Put most
10 simply, there is an alternative redistribution that meets
11 all of the statutory and electoral quota requirements,
12 delivers superior community of interest outcomes and
13 inflicts fewer community of interest harms on our
14 community. I'll speak in support of the sitting member's
15 objection.

16
17 The AEC does face a difficult task, to balance the
18 numerical requirements taking into account population and
19 demographic moves. In my submission, I have made a number
20 of observations about the underlying assumptions which are
21 used to forecast that North Sydney would be under quota in
22 2028, which are inconsistent with the AEC's own current
23 enrolment numbers, local and State planning policies to
24 create a priority population growth centre in the heart of
25 North Sydney, and the lived experience of the community.
26 Any forecast that suggests North Sydney would have fewer
27 electors in 2028 than it does today defies government
28 policy and runs contrary to common sense and reality. Yet,
29 here we are.

30
31 As I said, I have lived the entirety of 24 years in
32 North Sydney and I have always been a resident of the Lower
33 North Shore. Never once have I been a resident of the
34 Northern Beaches and never once have I been a resident of
35 the Ryde district.

36
37 Objection 686 from the sitting member sets out a
38 compelling alternative that meets quota and preserves two
39 distinct community identities, the Lower North Shore,
40 represented by North Sydney, and the Upper North Shore,
41 represented by Bradfield incorporating Berowra. These are
42 clearly defined identities that are deeply embedded in the
43 language and the living patterns of these communities. It
44 may be true that rivers flow to the sea, but jobs, trains,
45 buses, school kids, sporting teams and communities of North
46 Sydney run or flow further south.

1 686 makes the further comment I'd like to speak to,
2 which is preserving the consistency of representation for
3 the economic and population growth precincts of North
4 Sydney and Crows Nest in a single division. The
5 indisputable, in my opinion, centre of gravity of the
6 Wahroonga electorate sits east of the Spit Bridge. Its
7 identity is unabashedly associated with its core at Manly
8 and along the Northern Beaches. The North Sydney CBD and
9 Crows Nest, with their metro and heavy rail connections,
10 orient north-south. So placing these precincts at the
11 westernmost extremity - westernmost extremity - of a
12 Northern Beaches electorate on its face pays little regard
13 to the unique and specific needs of those business and
14 residential communities and their patterns of commerce and
15 living. And it would invite, I think as Zoe Baker said,
16 invite almost inevitably, another significant
17 redistribution in three or four years' time.

18
19 I would like to speak strongly in support of 231,
20 which was an anonymous comment, which suggests that North
21 Sydney is really only being abolished because nothing else
22 in the region is growing, in effect robbing Peter to pay
23 Paul by bolting high growth areas onto the static and
24 shrinking ones, and inflicting community of interest harms
25 in the process. I'll quote it. It says, "When a division
26 is to be abolished, past Committees have generally aimed to
27 split electors between as many neighbouring divisions as
28 possible, with the objective to minimise the 'blast radius'
29 of such an abolition." Incorporating Berowra into
30 Bradfield as has been put forward, I submit, has a
31 materially less impactful blast radius. Abolishing North
32 Sydney has a force multiplier effect on those damaging
33 communities of interest.

34
35 I'd also like to make a brief comment that no weight
36 be given to 210 in particular, as it has regard to
37 relocating St Ives into Mackellar. I would respectfully
38 submit that if the Commission takes the view that moving
39 St Ives to Mackellar represents an unacceptable community
40 of interest detriment, then the same should hold for moving
41 Wollstonecraft into Warringah and Greenwich into Bennelong.
42 The principle is the same, and that the community of
43 interest at St Ives should not be greater than the
44 community of interest of those other electorates.

45
46 If I've got time on indulgence, I'd like to offer some
47 reflections on this process as a member of the public. We

1 are seeing a remaking of civic dialogue in Australia, where
2 communities like ours in North Sydney are taking a much
3 more engaged and direct interest in our representation and
4 community governance. I commend the AEC for this process;
5 everyone has had a great chance to say their piece. But
6 I would like to encourage the Commission to do whatever you
7 can to invest in community confidence that the voices of
8 the people you hear today carry the same weight as the
9 institutional stakeholders for whom this is a day job and
10 for whom engagement with the Committee and the processed is
11 inevitably leavened by their own divergent interests in
12 outcomes in other divisions. We hold no higher interest
13 than the common best interest of our community, which we
14 are all serving by appearing here today. Thank you.

15
16 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker
17 will, Elijah Gaddi.

18
19 <ELIJAH GADDI:

20
21 MR GADDI: Hello, my name is Elijah Gaddi. I am here
22 representing Leon Shinkai. Leon currently lives in
23 northern Chatswood and has previously lived in the suburbs
24 of St Leonards, Northbridge, Willoughby and North
25 Willoughby. He has also attended high school in Killarney
26 Heights, Chatswood and Normanhurst. He primarily wishes to
27 issue comments on which electorate the Epping and
28 Forestville areas should be located in. Some comments may
29 differ from past positions due to recalling new details or
30 findings new solutions. This assumes St Ives stays in
31 Bradfield, which Leon claims to make North Sydney a certain
32 abolition.

33
34 The train connection between certain parts of Ryde LGA
35 relies on changing at the Epping interchange and many Ryde
36 LGA residents have a close association with Epping. This
37 already shows that there is merit to putting Epping in
38 Bennelong, but the effect this has on Bradfield and Berowra
39 further supports this case. This also has the effect of
40 putting all of Lane Cove North, Chatswood and Chatswood
41 West into the now Chatswood-based Bradfield. Most of these
42 areas are inside the Chatswood catchment areas for
43 Chatswood High School and hence has a very strong
44 gravitation to Chatswood rather than the Ryde-based
45 Bennelong. Lane Cove itself is in the catchment area for
46 Hunters Hill High School instead.

47

1 Further, this will move northern parts of Ku-ring-gai
2 LGA, which gravitates closer to Hornsby as a hub than to
3 Chatswood and to Berowra. Leon considers both to be
4 favourable. To that end, Leon asks the Committee to move
5 Epping back into Bennelong. He is less concerned about
6 North Epping and Carlingford.

7
8 Forestville. The bus connections from Forestville to
9 Dee Why and Chatswood are both reasonably good, with
10 services running every 10 to 15 minutes, respectively, at
11 peak times. Thus the present arrangement of having this in
12 the now Dee Why-based Mackellar is not problematic at all,
13 hence not objected to earlier. However, moving this to
14 Bradfield has several benefits. Firstly, the suburbs of
15 Narraweena and Beacon Hill will be united into Mackellar
16 where they were previously chopped at Warringah Road. This
17 will also moving Brookvale and Allambie Heights into
18 Mackellar.

19
20 Secondly, this will help unite communities of interest
21 in the Lower North Shore. St Leonards will be united with
22 the closely associated Crows Nest into Warringah. Further,
23 Naremburn and either Northbridge or Greenwich will also
24 move into Warringah, which Leon prefers the former of.
25 Northbridge has a very strong bus connection to North
26 Sydney and Warringah, with frequent services starting at
27 early times while services to Chatswood and Bradfield only
28 run every 30 minutes. This contrasts with the neighbouring
29 Willoughby, which has far stronger bus connections to
30 Chatswood but a far weaker connection to North Sydney.

31
32 When Leon was living in Northbridge and was attending
33 Normanhurst Boys High School, he was reliant on entering
34 the train network through North Sydney as buses did not run
35 to Chatswood at the times he needed them for 7.30am
36 classes. To that end, Leon asks that the Committee moves
37 Forestville, Killarney Heights and the southeastern parts
38 of Frenchs Forest into Bradfield. Thank you.

39
40 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. I wonder, is Gordon
41 Lang here? Good. Could you come to the lectern please,
42 Mr Lang.

43
44 <GORDON LANG:

45
46 MR LANG: My name is Gordon Lang. Thank you for the
47 opportunity to address this Commission. I am principally

1 addressing objection 671 regarding Mackellar. I am what is
2 locally called a newbie to Mackellar, as I have only lived
3 in Palm Beach for nine and a half years. However, my
4 connection dates back to a recorded rescue and attempted
5 resuscitation on Palm Beach in 1919 by my grandfather. My
6 parents spent many youthful days enjoying our great beaches
7 and ended up living in Mackellar for around 50 years. My
8 recently deceased wife's family had a house in the same
9 area for the same number of years. Whilst I did not grow
10 up in the electorate, most of my weekends and holidays were
11 spent there, where I attained a great passion and interest
12 in the area. More importantly, I met my late wife at the
13 beach.

14
15 I am an active surf lifesaver of 55 years, I've been
16 a member for four Northern Beaches surf clubs and a
17 president of one. I was president of Surf Life Saving
18 Sydney Northern Beaches, which encompasses 21 surf clubs
19 from Manly to North Palm Beach, and which at the time
20 encompassed 20,000 members. I was also on Surf Life Saving
21 NSW and Surf Life Saving Australia committees, including
22 Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service. I am honoured to be a
23 life member of both Palm Beach Surf Life Saving Club and
24 Surf Life Saving Northern Beaches. I was the Pittwater
25 Council Citizen of the Year in 2010 and nominated for New
26 South Wales Volunteer of the Year Northern Beaches 2018. I
27 am a director of the Palm Beach & Whale Beach Association
28 and 2IC of the local community fire unit. I operated a
29 local business for around 16 years and still mentor a
30 number of local businesses. Due to my strong and vocal
31 passion for regional economic development, I am a member of
32 the Northern Beaches Council Business and Industry
33 Stakeholders Committee, and its prior iteration, the
34 Economic Strategic Reference Groups, since 2015. I am
35 apolitical in as much as I am not a member of any political
36 party. I talk to and support anyone who works for the
37 benefit of our great community and region. I do believe I
38 am of and for the community.

39
40 Mackellar is currently wholly within the Northern
41 Beaches LGA, a clearly defined region. As part of the
42 redistribution process, my understanding is the AEC is only
43 required to consider four major factors. The fourth is a
44 logical parameter which supports having a Federal
45 electorate within one LGA where possible. The second and
46 about third factors define themselves. Northern Beaches is
47 bounded by the Pacific Ocean, Sydney Harbour, Pittwater and

1 national parks. To consider including non-Northern Beaches
2 within the electorate means transgressing one of these
3 barriers. These barriers do create a sense of ownership
4 and at times isolation, often for the good, except during
5 COVID. The transport system is principally north-south,
6 not east-west. The only real connection between the
7 current electorate's suburbs and those suggested at 671 is
8 the Mona Vale Roads. I do not want to say "outsiders", but
9 the North Sydney is a different region, culturally and
10 politically and population-wise. Viewing the first factor
11 is easy. Whilst there is difference between localities
12 within the LGA, they are bound by a definable lifestyle.
13 Most live here because of the beaches, coast, environment,
14 facilities and the community.

15
16 I appreciate the argument that there are differences
17 between the communities in the southern suggested suburbs
18 and the current suburbs. However, there is a stronger and
19 more distinct difference between the current electoral
20 suburbs and those on the North Shore. Dealing with the 21
21 surf clubs from Manly to North Palm Beach gave me strong
22 insight into the differences, but also highlighted the
23 common ground. A good number of surf club members do come
24 from outside the region, but a vast majority are from the
25 Northern Beaches. And, anecdotally, a good number of those
26 outsiders do eventually move to the Northern Beaches. The
27 majority of the residence interconnection is Northern
28 Beaches-defined, be it sporting, educational or cultural.
29 It is usually only at high levels that we venture outside
30 the region's boundaries.

31
32 According to sociology discussion, as "community" may
33 be defined as a group of people living in a defined
34 geographical area, characterised by a consciousness of
35 kind, common lifestyles and various intensive social
36 interaction. Mackellar is Northern Beaches, community-wise
37 and electorate. It is, to a strong degree, a homogenous
38 region. I strongly believe the original boundaries as
39 suggested by the AEC draft do fulfil this definition. I
40 support the original AEC draft boundaries. I would like to
41 thank you for your work and for hearing my thoughts. Thank
42 you.

43
44 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. We're going to take
45 Ms Zali Steggall MP by way of the conference now.

46
47 <ZALI STEGGALL:

1
2 MS STEGGALL: Good afternoon to the panel. If I could -
3 and I thank the Committee for the opportunity to address
4 it, even with the difficulties of Parliament sitting.

5
6 I'd like to start by paying my respects to traditional
7 Elders of the land I come to you from, but also the land on
8 which that we're talking about in these communities, in
9 particular since Warringah has such, I think, a distinctive
10 name, which is incredibly important in acknowledging the
11 traditional custodians and its history when it comes to
12 Indigenous people.

13
14 I would like to provide the perspective on behalf of
15 the current Warringah, as I have received a lot of
16 communications and submissions from them, and in relation
17 to the possible divisions of the North Shore, and then
18 comment on specific aspects as it relates to Warringah in
19 the draft redistribution proposal. I would suggest that
20 there are four distinct areas in the divisions that are
21 being considered in relation to this redistribution,
22 divisions of Warringah, Mackellar, North Sydney, Bradfield
23 and Berowra.

24
25 Firstly, the area east of Warringah Freeway
26 encompassing the suburbs known as the lower North Sydney,
27 being Kirribilli, Neutral Bay, Cremorne, Cammeray and
28 Mosman. This later shares a shoreline with Middle Harbour,
29 with Manly, and its surrounding suburbs. And this area has
30 been represented with Manly and Mosman at its core in the
31 electorate of Warringah in one form or another since 1922
32 as the Division of Warringah. And I note there's been very
33 few suggestions in relation to abolishing the Division of
34 Warringah, but there has been submissions in relation to
35 the name, which I strongly would refute. There is a strong
36 community of interest and transport connections in the
37 division as it is currently established, very clear retail
38 precincts, professional offices, recreational areas and a
39 vibrant sporting culture. Within its beaches, national
40 parks and shopping areas there is a very clear, relaxed
41 atmosphere and lifestyle that is very symptomatic of the
42 Warringah area and obviously very high from a tourism point
43 of view.

44
45 Secondly, the next area is to the north, the area
46 known as the upper Northern Beaches. Now, this of course
47 extends all the way up to Palm Beach, and that includes the

1 Division of Mackellar, and the suburbs in the hinterland of
2 Pittwater Road and settlements around Pittwater in the
3 Ku-ring-gai national park.
4

5 Thirdly, the area of focus is the area of North
6 Sydney. This inquiry is partly about the proposed
7 abolition of the North Sydney division, and I wanted to say
8 a few words about that. The North Sydney commercial
9 business district, within the CBD, is a very clear area and
10 very, I would argue, different to the other areas of the
11 current Warringah division. The North Sydney commercial
12 business district, with the CBDs of Sydney and Parramatta,
13 is one of the main CBDs in Sydney and I would say
14 Australia. It connects to the growth area of Crows Nest
15 and St Leonards, the industrial area in Artarmon and the
16 retail hub of Chatswood. And the corridor from North
17 Sydney CBD to Chatswood also contains major transport hubs,
18 such as train, new metro and highway, and two large
19 hospitals. Now, these are now significantly different to
20 the current Division of Warringah. Under the draft
21 redistribution proposal, the North Sydney CBD and Chatswood
22 corridor would be split and the Crows Nest St Leonards
23 growth areas would be divided into three very different
24 divisions. The draft proposal also splits two large
25 hospitals, and these splits, I would suggest, would make it
26 more difficult for Federal MPs to represent the communities
27 of interest that they service and to coordinate with local
28 and State representatives to address the specific needs of
29 those communities.
30

31 In addition, I note that both mayors of North Sydney
32 and Willoughby are expecting much higher population growth
33 in their council areas due to new density requirements, and
34 if that growth is taken into account by the ABS, on which
35 the AEC assumptions are based, it would suggest the real
36 future growth hasn't really adequately been considered.
37 I would also support the submissions I believe you have
38 already heard or are going to be hearing today in relation
39 to that there is a new social community of interest in the
40 North Sydney area that has brought the community together,
41 and this is a community of interest that should be
42 considered, and I support the submission by Ms Kylea Tink
43 in relation to that.
44

45 Fourthly, in relation to the distribution, there are
46 the suburbs of the mid and upper North Shore. Now, these
47 are largely residential, predominantly houses with

1 commercial and transport hub in Hornsby. And I support the
2 call that those areas have a particular identity quite
3 separate to the CBD of North Sydney and those areas. I
4 feel that each of the areas I've identified have clear
5 identities and needs, and they each meet the broad meaning
6 of "community of interest" under the Act, especially in
7 terms of community engagement, geography, history, and
8 transport connections, and they do warrant separate
9 representation in Federal Parliament. Consequently, I
10 support the request for the Committee to review its
11 decision to abolish the Division of North Sydney. And
12 while remaining, I obviously support also that Warringah
13 should be maintained and Mackellar, and I would argue that
14 the similarity of communities between Berowra and Bradfield
15 would support the suggestion made by Kylea Tink, Member for
16 North Sydney, that those seats be combined.

17
18 Finally, I would like to comment on the excision from
19 the current Division of Warringah of the areas of Frenchs
20 Forest, Forestville, Killarney Heights, Dee Why and Curl
21 Curl from Warringah. There hasn't really been any reason
22 for that excision of those areas from the current division
23 of Warringah. They have clear community of interest where
24 they are currently located, and much stronger linkage to
25 Warringah than they have to Mackellar and the northern part
26 of the beaches. The argument appears to be solely based on
27 the idea of being only within one Local Government Area,
28 but respectfully, that is not a criteria that is applied to
29 other divisions and it is highly common for Federal
30 divisions to be across multiple local government areas.
31 And so that, I would argue, is a - is not a primary
32 consideration for - in considering the redistribution
33 boundaries. The communities impacted by the proposed
34 excisions from Warringah also have strongly identified to
35 me to represent against being excised from Warringah, where
36 they have much stronger linkage to the shopping centres,
37 for example, of Warringah Mall and the southern part of the
38 peninsula than to the north.

39
40 Now, of course, I acknowledge the complexity the
41 Commission has before it in the need to reduce, but I
42 respectfully submit that an approach of minimal disruption
43 should be a priority to ensure continuation of
44 representation and best interest for the communities of
45 interest and, in such a vein of minimal disruption,
46 focusing on more logical and easier combination of - and
47 changes to boundaries. Thank you for the opportunity to

1 make this submission to the Commission.

2

3 CHAIR: Thank you very much for coming to speak to us
4 today. We are very grateful for you doing so.

5

6 I think it might be timely for all of us to have a
7 break. Perhaps I suggest half an hour. So if we reconvene
8 in half an hour's time. Thank you very much.

9

10 SHORT ADJOURNMENT

11

12 CHAIR: Well, good afternoon, everyone. It's time to
13 commence, I think, with Alex Burger. Is Mr Burger here?
14 Excellent. If he would come to the lectern and state his
15 name.

16

17 <ALEX BURGER:

18

19 MR BURGER: My name is Alex Burger. I've lived in Lane
20 Cove, which is part of the North Sydney electorate. I've
21 lived there for 35 years. I would like to thank the AEC
22 for this opportunity to discuss my concerns about the
23 abolition of the North Sydney seat. That being said, I do
24 understand this is a very difficult and complicated
25 process, trying to redistribute the boundaries. I
26 acknowledge that. There are three main points I want to
27 make.

28

29 The first one is about connection. As the electoral
30 boundaries have changed during my time in Lane Cove, I have
31 voted both in Bennelong and North Sydney. A key
32 geographical feature which dividends the Bennelong
33 electorate is the Lane Cove River. In recent years, as
34 part of the North Sydney electorate with members such as
35 Joe Hockey, Trent Zimmerman and Kylea Tink, I've noticed a
36 much great level of voter interest and engagement amongst
37 my friends and acquaintances in Lane Cove. I believe this
38 reflects the connections Lane Cove citizens feel with the
39 eastern side of the Lane Cove River, whether it be
40 community, business, health services or education.

41

42 My next point is about projected population. The
43 latest newsletter from Lane Cove Council, which I'm holding
44 up here, reports their responses to the New South Wales
45 government planning for housing in our area. Within the
46 south St Leonards precinct there will be 2,900 new
47 dwellings, with 900 of these already in process. In all,

1 the statement government is proposing 3,400 new dwellings
2 in the Lane Cove Council area by 2029 and there are similar
3 projections for other parts of the North Sydney seat, with
4 major residential investment clustered around stations on
5 the new Chatswood to Sydenham metro line. All this amounts
6 to strong growth population growth in the North Sydney
7 electorate.

8
9 Now, my next major point is around health services.

10 The North Sydney electorate includes the Royal North Shore
11 Hospital, the Mater Hospital and the North Shore Private
12 Hospital. Along with these are all the associated medical
13 services. There's the specialists, there's the imaging
14 services, there's the ambulance, as well as many others.
15 These health services are not just for residents of North
16 Sydney, but for a large part of the Sydney population, as
17 well as rural and regional people who need to come to
18 Sydney for treatment. These hospitals and supporting
19 services are located in St Leonards, Wollstonecraft, Crows
20 Nest and Artarmon, and are located within a 2 kilometre
21 boundary hub.

22
23 The proposed boundary changes will see these important
24 services fall into three different electorates. I believe
25 this is counterproductive, to have these services
26 distributed into those three electorates. This hub of
27 health services needs one coherent voice in Parliament,
28 rather than three individual and arguably competing voices.
29 With that, I finish my presentation. Thank you very much.

30
31 CHAIR: Just before you go, you had a document when you
32 were talking about population. Might we have a copy of it?

33
34 MR BURGER: You can take this one.

35
36 CHAIR: Thanks very much indeed. Thank very much indeed.
37 It will be helpful.

38
39 The next speaker will be Barry Buffier, I think.

40
41 <BARRY BUFFIER:

42
43 MR BUFFIER: Thank you, Commissioners, for the opportunity
44 to address you today. My name is Barry Buffier. I have
45 been a resident of Hunters Hill for the last 12 years. I
46 am a community representative on the local planning panel
47 for the Hunters Hill Council an a very active member of

1 North Shore Rowing Club. I would like to address my
2 comments to the proposal to abolish the Division of North
3 Sydney and how that fails to meet the community of interest
4 test. I don't envy your mandated task of considering all
5 the objections and comments on the proposal, and I do
6 acknowledge that those proposals don't come from you, but
7 you're sitting over the top of those.

8
9 Many of the objections lodged question the veracity of
10 the statistical projections for the number of electors in
11 North Sydney come 2028. It's not surprising, really, that
12 there were so many objections, because it is difficult to
13 envisage a scenario where there is actually predicted to be
14 fewer electors in 2028 than currently exist. You could be
15 excused for thinking that North Sydney is a stagnant
16 backwater, being buffeted by the winds of change and
17 technology, yet this is one of the projections relied on by
18 the Redistribution Committee. I won't comment further on
19 that, but I place a lot of emphasis on objection 720, which
20 is most compelling in this regard, and I understand the
21 author, Margaret Stoneman, will be addressing you later
22 today.

23
24 But in my opinion, a much larger problem is the
25 apparent disregard by the Redistribution Committee for
26 their duty to comply with the following requirement, which
27 is the same requirement as you have, which states, "In
28 relation to each proposed Federal electoral division, you
29 must give due consideration to the community of interest
30 within the proposed electoral division, including economic,
31 regional and social interest.". I would question what
32 weight was given by the Redistribution Committee to that
33 requirement and that consideration. Fortunately, it's up
34 to you. You have the ability to rectify that oversight.

35
36 So, where is the rationale for abolishing North Sydney
37 and dividing the spoils three ways? Many of the objections
38 that were lodged highlight what a strong community of
39 interest exists in North Sydney. That's not surprising
40 when it's the third-largest CBD in Australia, hosting
41 28,000 small to medium businesses, as detailed in objection
42 197. And as you heard from the previous speakers, it is a
43 very significant health hub and educational hub. It has a
44 long history of community action on issues that are
45 relevant to the community, all of which helps to explain
46 that it's been a seat since Federation, 123 years ago.
47 It's not by chance that that's happened.

1
2 I acknowledge that the job you have of assessing the
3 strength, capacity and size of one community of interest
4 against another is somewhat subjective since it can't be
5 easily assessed in purely quantitative terms, but that's
6 part of what you're required to do in considering all these
7 viewpoints or objectives. But I can't for the life of me
8 understand why anyone would deliberately trifurcate such an
9 outstanding example of a strong, viable and vibrant
10 community of interest as North Sydney. And it's even worse
11 when there's no compelling statistical analysis to justify
12 it.

13
14 Surely, one criteria for any redistribution would be
15 the objective of trying to retain and nurture those strong
16 communities of interest, so why would you pick one of the
17 strongest in Australia as one that you found suitable to
18 split apart? The objective of redistributions should be to
19 enhance the democratic process by allowing the views of
20 significant communities of interest to be reflected in
21 Parliament. This proposed redistribution is effectively
22 diluting the voice of a very strong community of interest
23 by dispersing it into three other electorates.

24
25 However, this is not the first time that such a
26 trifurcation has been proposed. It has happened before in
27 Victoria, in 2010, when there was a draft proposal for the
28 abolition of the Division of Murray in Victoria. For those
29 of you who don't know that, this is the irrigation food
30 bowl of the Murray Valley in the central Goulburn
31 irrigation district, centred around Shepparton. You
32 couldn't get a better example of a strong and vibrant
33 community of interest. Not surprisingly, it caused a
34 similar community uproar and objections. Fortunately, the
35 augmented commissioners listened to those reasons and
36 logic, and announced a decision to reinstate the division
37 of Murray.

38
39 Commissioners, there can be little doubt from your
40 readings of the objections and the passion of the people
41 who are here speaking today that the community of interest
42 argument in relation to North Sydney is overwhelming and
43 has not yet been given due consideration. In conclusion, I
44 urge you in the strongest possible terms in your
45 deliberations to emulate the commissioners of Victoria in
46 2010 and reject the proposal to abolish North Sydney.
47 Thank you.

1
2 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker will
3 be Pat Evans.

4
5 <PAT EVANS:

6
7 MS EVANS: Thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak
8 with you today. My name is Pat Evans and I am speaking
9 against the abolition of the Division of North Sydney. I
10 am a long-term resident of North Sydney, residing in Middle
11 Cove. I have submitted an objection and a comment on
12 objections. Now, I have to confess that this is the first
13 time I have taken such an active interest in the electoral
14 process. I feel a strong connection to the North Sydney
15 community, where we share a common civic interest, and
16 I would hate to lose that connection with the abolition of
17 my electorate.

18
19 Now, firstly, I can't see or comprehend a clear
20 rationale for this proposal. It does not seem to stand up
21 on the projected growth numbers, as clearly outlined in
22 various submissions, including objections 729 and 702, plus
23 comments on objections 212 and 133. Many have noted that
24 both the AEC actual recently gazetted data, up-to-date ABS
25 population data, and the NSW Government housing targets,
26 and the housing strategies and plans of the four local
27 government areas, all of these predict a vastly different
28 and more realistic population outcome that negates any
29 concern regarding having the required number of electors in
30 the Division of North Sydney.

31
32 The "community of interest" factor does not appear to
33 have been given due consideration in the abolition
34 proposal. Objection 686 by the current MP details this
35 well. The importance of that eastern economic corridor
36 being represented by a dedicated Federal MP is well-defined
37 in objection 702, and the distressing impact on one suburb,
38 Crows Nest, being split into three, is highlighted in
39 objection 729. The genuine concerns about breaking up
40 communities of interest are repeated so many times.

41
42 Before I conclude, I would also like to make a brief
43 comment on COB210 from the Liberal party. Aside from the
44 dismissive and uninformed comment regarding the abolition
45 of North Sydney, their other comments appear to be all
46 about political issues and swipes at the Labor party. This
47 surprised me, as I naively thought this process did not

1 consider political issues, but focused on the number of
2 electors in each division and other factors such as
3 communities of interest. On the basis of the approach in
4 COB210, I would suggest that their comments should be
5 disregarded.

6
7 With the Division of North Sydney, we have a
8 well-connected, well-integrated, actively functioning
9 community that has in recent times and over the decades
10 demonstrated shared values and common interests. One
11 example is the recent yes vote and another is a history of
12 supporting independence. That can be retained with the
13 alternative and superior proposal presented in objection
14 686 that meets the demographic requirements and has fewer
15 community impacts.

16
17 We also have a division that has projected growth in
18 the electoral roll based on current forecasts from multiple
19 prospective sources, including the recent AEC data, ABS
20 statistics, State Government and Local Government Area
21 housing targets and plans. This alone should be enough to
22 force a reconsideration of the abolition of the Division of
23 North Sydney, and I respectfully request that the numbers
24 are reviewed in light of these projections.

25
26 Right now, it feels like we are almost in an ongoing
27 battle between two warring political machines, and there is
28 no place for regular ordinary citizens who believe that in
29 a democracy our opinions should count and we are entitled
30 to a voice. The more I learn about some of the processes,
31 the more powerless and disadvantaged I start to feel. I
32 urge you to consider the genuine concern and the deeply
33 felt wishes of North Sydney residents, who wish to retain
34 their electorate, plus retain their belief in the integrity
35 of our electoral system and the future of our democracy.
36 Thank you for your consideration.

37
38 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker to
39 Claire Finch.

40
41 <CLAIRE FINCH:

42
43 MS FINCH: I'd like to thank the Commission for this
44 opportunity to address the panel. My name is Claire Finch.
45 I and my family have lived in Artarmon in the North Sydney
46 electorate for about 20 years, and we identify as being
47 part of the North Sydney community. The reason I am here

1 today, not my comfort zone, is that like many people I was
2 upset, dismayed, distressed, to learn of the proposal by
3 the Redistribution Committee for New South Wales to abolish
4 the Division of North Sydney. I submitted an objection
5 and a comment on objection. I wrote of coming from the UK
6 as a migrant and finding a community of health, social,
7 education and sport within North Sydney. Perhaps it's an
8 indictment on myself that activities within these
9 communities mean I rarely go north of Chatswood.

10
11 I'd like to thank the Commission for the additional
12 opportunity to make further representation and would like
13 to address in particular the comment on objection 210 which
14 was made by the Liberal party. I'll limit myself to
15 commenting on the first paragraph, which I'll just read
16 quickly and briefly:

17 The NSW Division of the Liberal Party of
18 Australia has examined the 738 objections
19 to your proposal.

20
21 The vast bulk of these can be characterised
22 as a "paper war", solicited by three
23 Federal Members using their parliamentary
24 resources to support some very dubious
25 propositions not built around any of the
26 statutory criteria for which the augmented
27 Electoral Commission are required to have
28 regard.

29
30 I too have read the 738 objections, maybe give or take a
31 few, and I would make three points in regard to this
32 paragraph on DOB210 as regards to whether the vast bulk of
33 submissions can be considered as a paper war, whether
34 Parliamentary resources were used, and whether the
35 statutory criteria were not addressed.

36
37 May I tell the panel I have a personal interest in
38 this, because I used to lecture on critical reasoning in
39 writing, and so when I read this, I felt that I would have
40 marked this first paragraph as not yet competent, requiring
41 a rewrite, and I'd like to give my reasons for that, and
42 the comments I would have made to the writer. So to be
43 specific, my comments could have been on the first point,
44 is it a paper war, I would have written, "Reason?? Isn't
45 the required process in the form of written submissions
46 necessitating paper? Are you saying there were pro forma
47 or template submissions by those advocating the retention

1 of North Sydney as a seat? I didn't see - having read them
2 myself, I didn't see any evidence of that. I found the
3 majority of objectors wrote apolitically, unlike your own
4 piece of writing, focusing on such issues as consideration
5 of population growth and lived experience and their sense
6 of being part of the community, so not a paper war."
7

8 On the second point, saying that parliamentary
9 resources were used, I would have written next to that,
10 "Fact check? I did fact check and found that parliamentary
11 resources were not used by the North Sydney electorate
12 office. I don't have time to fact check other areas, but
13 as you are the writer, this is your responsibility. Please
14 fact check before writing a second draft."
15

16 On the third point against, the statutory criteria
17 were not addressed, I would have written "Be more specific.
18 This is, of course, for the Commission to decide. However,
19 in my reading of the objections relating to North Sydney,
20 in the vast majority of cases it looks to me as if the
21 statutory criteria were significantly addressed, without
22 straying into political issues. There were numerous
23 examples given of people's communities of interest. And
24 reading some of them, I realised they related to me, too. I
25 hadn't realised that all the years of netball and daughters
26 playing netball had taken place in North Sydney, in the
27 netball association. So, I would encourage you, the writer
28 of COB210, to avoid writing sweeping sentences unless
29 backed by evidence and to always fact check." The writer
30 then goes on to dismiss the alternative proposal made by
31 the sitting member of the Federal seat of North Sydney as
32 being without merit, and that it ought to be rejected.
33

34 I recognise the Commission has a very difficult task
35 in finding a solution to the number of seats to be formed,
36 while taking into account ever-changing demographics and
37 communities of interest. However, on reading the
38 alternative proposal by the sitting member for the Federal
39 seat of North Sydney, OB686, I found it tightly argued,
40 based on facts which were in addition to the original
41 proposal, and that they had great merit, in my eyes.
42 I would therefore ask the panel to dismiss the COB210 as
43 being without merit and that it be given no weight, but
44 rather to consider the proposal made in OB686, which I
45 thought did have merit in providing a well thought out
46 solution with minimum impact on communities. Thank you for
47 your time.

1
2 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker
3 will, Jillian Bryant Deere.

4
5 <JILLIAN BRYANT DEERE:

6
7 MS BRYANT: Good afternoon and thank you for the
8 opportunity to speak today. My name is Jill Bryant, and I
9 live in Queenscliff in Warringah. I have been a resident
10 of Warringah electorate since I arrived in Sydney over 30
11 years ago, and would like to speak in support of Zali
12 Steggall's submission 671. Whilst I wasn't politically
13 active before I left England, I quickly understood the
14 importance of community in Warringah as I became involved
15 in Peter McDonald's independent Federal campaign in 2001.
16 Career and family stood into the way of much more political
17 activity until I became aware of the independent community
18 bringing people together to stand up against the sitting
19 member in 2019. Over the years, I have become more engaged
20 and developed a deeper understanding of what belonging to a
21 like-minded community means, and how much stronger a
22 democracy is when ordinary people feel they are heard.

23
24 Having recently moved from North Balgowlah to
25 Queenscliff, it does feel that it is a suburb very much
26 joined with Curl Curl to one side and Manly to the other,
27 with easy links of public transport and a boardwalk. Just
28 as Dee Why and Curl Curl are hand-in-hand with Freshie and
29 Manly, Wollstonecraft and Waverton do not seem to share
30 that family tie. I worked in Waverton for three months
31 when I first arrived in Sydney, and to be honest, I haven't
32 been there since. It therefore seems appropriate to
33 maintain these links that we have and to instead look
34 further north to Berowra and Bradfield for a more
35 appropriate combination, as Kylea Tink has outlined in her
36 submission 676.

37
38 Finally, I would like to support those who believe the
39 Aboriginal name of Warringah should remain for the
40 electorate. To those of us who feel a sense of belonging,
41 there appears little benefit in changing it, and indeed it
42 reflects the AEC's own criteria, I believe, of maintaining
43 Indigenous names where possible.

44
45 I would like to thank the AEC for this opportunity to
46 speak on redistribution, as it balances the needs and
47 values of local communities and the future populations.

1 Thank you.

2
3 CHAIR: Thank you very much. The next speaker is Susan
4 Edwards.

5
6 <SUSAN EDWARDS:

7
8 MS EDWARDS: My name is Susan Edwards and I live in
9 Bennett Street, Cremorne, part of Warringah. I am a lawyer
10 and a university lecturer. I moved into the electorate at
11 the end of 2019, so I missed the big election that was just
12 referred to, and it's the seventh electorate I have lived
13 in. I appreciate the opportunity to express my views on
14 the proposed redistribution.

15
16 Basically, I will be speaking about the importance of
17 maintaining the sense of community of Warringah, and
18 secondly, of the importance of not losing the independent
19 electorate of North Sydney, also representing a unique
20 segment of the Australian population. I also strongly
21 support the submission of Zali Steggall. Warringah is the
22 first electorate I have lived in which has an identity of
23 its own.

24
25 The previous electorate I lived in for 22 years had no
26 activities based on the electorate, whereas Warringah has
27 activities which unify our electorate. Our electorate is
28 more than lines on a map. We are a beach and harbour
29 community. There is a sense of shared values, including
30 those focused on environmental protection and the realities
31 of climate change. There is a strong focus on democratic
32 values, including the quality of our representation in
33 Canberra, and there are regular community meetings,
34 surveys, walks and other activities based around giving the
35 community the opportunity to express its views and to
36 receive feedback. The community has come to expect
37 Warringah-based activities, and the regular holding of such
38 activities has created new friendships and bonds within the
39 electorate.

40
41 Although I have always been politically aware, this
42 wonderful sense of community has caused me for the first
43 time to become active on the basis of the electorate in
44 which I live, and I have walked for community issues,
45 assisted with surveys to gauge the views of the electorate,
46 helped respond to questions raised by fellow members of the
47 electorate through the electoral office, and I became

1 involved in the last election as I was keen to preserve the
2 culture we have.

3
4 I urge the Commission to reconsider the proposal to
5 change the boundaries of what is a cohesive electorate with
6 a strong sense of identity. North Sydney has a separate
7 identity and also an electorate valuing an independent
8 voice in the Federal Parliament. It saddens me that a
9 consequence of the proposed redistribution would be the
10 loss of an independent electorate and thus deny the current
11 residents of that electorate their separate, independent
12 voice.

13
14 I believe that the representation of diversity is
15 important in a democracy. Electorates around the country
16 have emerged wanting their own independent voice,
17 representing their own issues. This is the basis of
18 representational democracy. The loss of an independent
19 voice for North Sydney as a consequence of a
20 redistribution, rather than voter choice, is terribly
21 upsetting. Further, on the theme of diversity, it is very
22 upsetting that we would lose a seat represented by a woman
23 if the redistribution results in the loss of a female MP.

24
25 And finally, on the issue of diversity, I urge the
26 retention of the Indigenous name of Warringah. Its
27 acknowledgement of this country's Indigenous identity is
28 important. It is a name used for a variety of things
29 throughout the electorate, and is a name familiar to our
30 residents, under which our community unites. So for
31 reasons of community and for the importance of our
32 independent voices, I urge that there be no change to the
33 boundaries of Warringah or the abolition of the seat of
34 North Sydney. Thank you very much.

35
36 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is
37 Kate Lindsay.

38
39 <KATE LINDSAY:

40
41 MS LINDSAY: Good afternoon. I am Kate Lindsay. Thank
42 you for allowing me to speak here today. I appreciate this
43 process that we are going through, as I value our
44 representative democracy and I value the independence that
45 comes to this process. This is not my comfort zone either,
46 but I felt the need to turn up today to object to the
47 dissolution of the seat of North Sydney. I want to speak

1 to the communities of interest requirement that is a
2 consideration in the reassignment of electoral boundaries.
3 And really, I want to speak from a personal viewpoint.
4

5 I have been a member of the North Sydney electorate
6 since 1995. I currently live in Northbridge. I have three
7 children who have been to school in Northbridge and are now
8 in North Sydney. I am dismayed that there will be a
9 redistribution of the area in which my family and I live
10 and engage. Our focus is the Lower North Shore and I think
11 of us as living in the Lower North Shore, not in
12 Northbridge. My children are in the school sports clubs of
13 Northern Suburbs Netball, which was mentioned earlier, and
14 a shout out to Northern Suburbs Tennis Association too, and
15 also involved heavily in music through Big Music at Crows
16 Nest, who are engaged in community activities in Crows
17 Nest. I am a singer myself. I sang at the Crows Nest
18 fair. I'll be singing at the Northbridge Bar's 100th
19 anniversary on 12 October, just a little shout out.
20

21 So we're engaged, and this is our community, and the
22 other aspect that I want to talk about is how activated
23 this community has become. I have never been engaged with
24 politics prior to the last election, and now I'm heavily
25 engaged. And I see that in my neighbourhood, I see it in
26 the signs that go up, in the conversations that are had.
27 People are engaged politically. There is civic engagement
28 in North Sydney, which I think is such a precious
29 commodity, and that is the thing that I am really dismayed
30 to think might be lost with this redistribution.
31

32 I became engaged with the Voices of North Sydney
33 before they found Kylea Tink and I volunteered on Kylea's
34 campaign, so I can't say that I am apolitical. My daughter
35 had just turned 18 and I thought it was important to
36 represent to my daughters that you need to stand up and you
37 need to turn up and you need to be involved. And I have
38 found that the area in which I live, the Federal electorate
39 in which I live, has encouraged that and has engaged me.
40

41 I appreciate the difficulty with this redistribution
42 and that there are various options on the table. I am
43 particularly dismayed at the idea that Crows Nest will be
44 split into three portions at a Federal level, given the
45 forecast growth in this area, the opening up of new
46 stations in North Sydney and in Crows Nest. And those are
47 really my arguments to request the reconsideration of the

1 proposal to dissolve the North Sydney electorate. I feel
2 personally about it. I feel dismayed that it is being
3 considered. And I hope that you will take the community
4 interest, which I have seen today - I've been here all
5 morning - that you will take those interests into
6 consideration. Thank you.

7
8 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is
9 Mary Curran.

10
11 <MARY CURRAN:

12
13 MS CURRAN: Thank you for the opportunity to address you
14 today. My name is Mary Curran. I would also like to thank
15 and support those other speakers who braved the elements to
16 explain why we need to retain our North Sydney electorate.
17 In particular, the submission from our current sitting
18 member, Kylea Tink.

19
20 I am a member of HarbourCare, Streets Alive, the
21 Waverton Peninsula Working Group and Euroka Precinct. I
22 have very deep connections to our community. I have lived
23 and worked in the North Sydney electorate since 1984. In
24 fact, I purchased my first one bedroom unit in Crows Nest
25 in 1984. We thought of it a high-rise then, when it was a
26 three-storey walk up. How times have changed. Crows Nest
27 landscape bears little resemblance to those decades. And
28 that is why I'm asking you today not to divide this area.
29 Please consider not the past, not the current, but the
30 future.

31
32 With the metro opening, numerous high-rise are under
33 construction, resulting in many more residents coming to
34 live in this community. It needs to have cohesive
35 representation. My stepdaughter purchased a one-bedroom
36 unit in Crows Nest only last week. Please afford her the
37 representation she deserves. Our history of representation
38 should be maintained. I thank you for your time.

39
40 CHAIR: Thanks so much. The next speaker is Cathy Browne.

41
42 <CATHY BROWNE:

43
44 MS BROWNE: I'd like to begin, as many others have, by
45 expressing my sincere thanks to the redistribution
46 committee for this whole AEC process, and thank you for
47 your valuable time, expertise and attention. A quick look

1 at the news reveals that most of the world has a very
2 different reality from the one we share here today, and my
3 experience here is one that I profoundly value and
4 appreciate.

5
6 My name is Cathy Browne. I live in Lavender Bay with
7 my husband. I feel that I haven't had the time, nor do I
8 have the expertise, to do justice to this opportunity to
9 speak, for which I apologise. Nevertheless, I am here
10 because I am strongly opposed to dismembering the
11 integrity, effectiveness, aggressiveness and power of the
12 North Sydney Federal electorate, as I see it.

13
14 For us in the North Sydney Federal electorate, the
15 Pacific Highway is not a convenient highway separating
16 disparate areas, as the proposed redistribution seems to
17 envisage it in part. The highway is a transport spine
18 through our cohesive electorate, around which we coalesce.
19 Three elements in particular which this three-way division
20 will impact diversity, I believe, are medical, economic and
21 community. And I also am aware that you're listening to
22 the same things again and again, and I'm going to
23 contribute to that, sadly.

24
25 I would like to note that Liberal COB210 dismisses
26 Labor's proposal of unifying Epping southwards, describing
27 it as a "curious three-way splitting". This curious
28 three-way splitting is exactly what would happen in Crows
29 Nest to St Leonards under the current proposed draft
30 abolition of the seat of North Sydney, which however the
31 Liberal objection doesn't oppose or seek to amend.

32
33 The proposed North Sydney three-way submission
34 includes the division of the major currently highly
35 effective St Leonards medical hub, resulting in North Shore
36 hospital and associated entities on one side, the Mater and
37 a range of rival specialist services on the other. These
38 serve not only our local area, but offer some state-wide
39 best practice services in specific medical areas such as
40 spinal injury at Royal North Shore and birthing excellence
41 at the Mater. We know that our medical system is under
42 significant financial and other stresses. Surely this
43 division into separate Federal seats for which different
44 MPs are responsible would further complicate this already
45 complex situation.

46
47 Another currently vital, effective and also rapidly

1 developing area is our North Sydney CBD, as has been said,
2 as I'm sure you know, the third largest in the state. Our
3 wider business precincts, including Crows Nest, St Leonards
4 and Artarmon, house more than 25,000 small businesses which
5 offer a wide range of services and which will continue to
6 grow as our population increases into all the high-rise
7 apartment blocks everywhere being planned and built. What
8 economist or urban planner would arbitrarily divide such a
9 significant economic precinct between different governing
10 or managing entities?

11
12 The third area I'd like to address is the social or
13 community character of North Sydney. I've lived as an
14 adult in Avalon, Epping, Mosman, what is now Macquarie Park
15 and the upper North Shore. I've never encountered such an
16 informed, engaged group of people as those I know or have
17 encountered in North Sydney. We are a disparate community
18 of many ethnicities, religions, opinions and backgrounds,
19 who inclusively work side-by-side to offer friendship,
20 hospitality, social support, services, jobs, education and
21 opportunity to one another, as well as to a wide range of
22 people, groups and organisations outside our community. We
23 have a well-developed, long-held community of interests
24 which is different from that of the three electorates into
25 which it is proposed that North Sydney be absorbed.

26
27 I understand that this necessary redistribution
28 process is the art of the possible, like most things, and a
29 compromise is always needed. In this spirit, I'd like to
30 support the redistribution proposal OB686, which I think
31 achieves both the retention of the strong North Sydney
32 community and its economic entity and social entity, and
33 all those things which many people have spoken about, and
34 it does this without, I think, significant harm or
35 disruption elsewhere. I therefore respectfully request
36 that the proposal to abolish the Federal seat of North
37 Sydney be reconsidered in the light of the detriment to the
38 seat's powerful community interests and effectiveness that
39 I believe will result. Magnifying this detriment, I
40 believe, are the projected numbers on which the
41 redistribution is based, which seem to me to be
42 demonstrably outdated, including on the AEC website, and
43 which others much more informed than me I believe have
44 specifically addressed. Thank you very much for your time.

45
46 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is
47 Nerissa Levy.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47

<NERISSA LEVY:

MS LEVY: Thank you, committee, for the opportunity to speak today and contribute to the redistribution process. My name is Nerissa Levy. I am a resident of Crows Nest. My profession is as a market research data analyst, and I regularly work with ABS data and population statistics. I have lived and worked in the Northern Sydney region my whole life. I contributed to the objection raised by Kylea Tink MP, OB686. I contributed to the alternative proposal for redistribution to the whole North Sydney region, and I support maintaining the Division of North Sydney. I volunteered to do this work after the release of the draft redistribution, and noting its significant impact to my community of Crows Nest, an area of fast growth and urban renewal in the next five to 10 years.

I wanted to speak today to further explain the reasonings behind decisions made in the alternative proposal in OB686, acknowledging also the necessity to reduce the number of divisions in the wider Northern Sydney region. It was clear from the unprecedented number of objections received in recent weeks that many people in the region were opposed to splitting of significant business, shopping, transport hubs in their local communities, not just in Crows Nest North Sydney, but also in the areas of Epping, Eastwood, et cetera.

The Committee should acknowledge, and I'm sure you do, that this is not an ideal result in the current draft distribution, as it rightfully noted in the draft about reuniting Chatswood, also in our local area. So I approached the proposal with the goal of reuniting significant localities within their distinct communities of interest, as well as others in the wider northern Sydney region. I do acknowledge, having made an attempt at a proposal myself, the difficulties of drawing a redistribution, that no map is perfect, that compromises will always need to be made to satisfy the number of elector quotas.

As a basic principle, I suppose, any division will be a combination of numerous communities of interest. No group of over 120,000 electors is homogenous in any way, so within any division there is going to be some communities of interest that have similar concerns, similar

1 practicalities, and other communities of interest will have
2 different concerns.

3
4 I suggest that a poorer outcome for electors is to
5 divide a community of interest, splitting
6 commercial/transport hubs areas with a high concentration
7 of schools, hospitals and other services that makes the
8 role of an elected MP more difficult. So, thus I would
9 argue that it's far better to combine different distinct
10 communities of interest than it is to fracture existing
11 communities of interest purely on geographical lines.
12

13 So with all of this in mind, the proposal in OB686
14 aimed to minimise fracturing of communities of interest by
15 maintaining the Division of North Sydney within the Lower
16 North Shore and extending north along - like, locating the
17 Division of Mackellar in the upper Northern Beaches and
18 extending into the St Ives area, along with other changes
19 as previously detailed. And it did all of this whilst
20 still achieving the required elector quotas. So the
21 locality of St Ives and St Ives Chase can naturally be
22 considered a distinct community of interest.
23 Demographically they are distinct from neighbouring suburbs
24 of Pymble and Turramurra. Their population is older,
25 they're more likely to own their home outright, they use
26 private vehicles more, and they also include a large
27 diaspora of groups that are not present in different nearby
28 suburbs. They have their own central shopping, social and
29 transport hub around the St Ives Chase Shopping Centre and
30 St Ives Village Green.
31

32 Some objections were made to the inclusion of St Ives
33 region in Mackellar, on the basis that the locals of
34 St Ives and Mona Vale are disconnected. However, I would
35 argue that they are connected to Terrey Hills and Mona Vale
36 within the Mackellar electorate via the same major road and
37 two bus routes. The boundaries suggested in the proposal I
38 did was also aligned with the New South Wales state's
39 Division of Davidson, that includes both Forest and
40 St Ives, so there's a precedent for that conclusion.
41

42 So this is all on the basis of creating the least harm
43 in the redistribution, to include distinct communities of
44 interest together and keeping them intact whilst reducing
45 the splitting of communities of interest like Crows Nest,
46 Epping, Hornsby, even. So, I thank you all for the
47 community to speak.

1
2 CHAIR: Thank you very much. The next speaker will be
3 Rebecca Clarke.

4
5 <REBECCA CLARKE:

6
7 MS CLARKE: Good afternoon. Thank you for this
8 opportunity to speak. My name is Rebecca Clark. I have
9 lived in Mona Vale and Mackellar for 30 years. I have also
10 been extensively involved in the community independent
11 movement over the last five years, as I strongly believe
12 that having a politically engaged community is crucial to a
13 strong and healthy democracy. I completely understand the
14 devastation felt by Kylea Tink MP and her supporters on the
15 proposed abolition of North Sydney after they have
16 dedicated so much work into strengthening community
17 engagement and representation in that area.

18
19 I would prefer North Sydney not to be abolished.
20 However, I do not agree with objections 671 and 686
21 alternative proposal, which both include the suggestion
22 that the locality of St Ives should be transferred to
23 Mackellar. In my opinion, the Redistribution Committee
24 made the right and sensible decision not to do this, and
25 this decision has been further well-supported in many
26 written submissions and by people here today.

27
28 However, if the augmented Electoral Commission decides
29 to revisit the proposal to abolish North Sydney, it does
30 not necessarily follow that the only option is for St Ives
31 to be transferred to Mackellar. There are many different
32 ways to slice a cake. I suggest two alternatives in
33 regards to Mackellar that would meet the requirements of
34 the Commonwealth Electoral Act and may assist if the
35 decision is made to revisit the proposal to abolish North
36 Sydney.

37
38 The first is the suggestion I made in COB176, and only
39 represents a slight variation on the current redistribution
40 proposal. That is to only transfer the proposed electors
41 in Dee Why and North Curl Curl from Warringah to Mackellar.
42 This would provide enough additional electors for Mackellar
43 to be within the permissible range. It would unite the
44 currently split locality of Dee Why, which is a major
45 commercial and residential area. The proposed boundary
46 along Curl Curl Lagoon is easily identifiable and was in
47 place between 1968 to 1983. It would also allow the

1 electors in Killarney Heights and Forestville to remain in
2 Warringah. Therefore Warringah would need to gain fewer
3 electors than currently proposed from North Sydney.
4

5 The second suggestion is a significant variation from
6 the current proposal, but was mentioned in at least a
7 number of early submissions, Anonymous 13 and CO7. By
8 raising them again today, I wanted to ensure that this
9 suggestion didn't get overlooked due to the volume of other
10 objections and comments relating to Mackellar.
11

12 Mackellar could become a long, narrow electorate from
13 Palm Beach in the North to Manly in the South, encompassing
14 all the beaches in between, as it did when it was first
15 created in 1949 and remained like this until 1968. This
16 would strengthen the existing dominant community of
17 interest in Mackellar created by the culture and lifestyle
18 associated with the beaches. The beaches are the essence
19 of the community and an electoral division that includes
20 them all would provide the truest reflection of our
21 community. Admittedly, the boundary would need to be
22 carefully drawn to avoid an excess of electors, but I
23 believe that is your area of expertise. The proximity to
24 beaches is why many of us choose to live in Mackellar. The
25 surf clubs, with our large base of local volunteers, create
26 significant communities of interest.
27

28 The major arterial road, Barrenjoey Road, and its
29 continuation into Pittwater Road, link all the beach
30 suburbs along its 28 kilometre route from Palm Beach to
31 Manly. This road is one that many of us use daily as we
32 commute to work, go to school do our shopping, carry on our
33 business, seek health or other government services, and for
34 our sport and recreation activities. It is a major public
35 transport route that takes us to other parts of the
36 electorate and into the city. This suggestion would mean
37 that a significant number of electors in the western
38 localities of Mackellar could be transferred to the
39 neighbouring electoral divisions of Warringah and/or
40 Bradfield. Thank you.
41

42 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is
43 Mary-Jane Morgan.
44

45 <MARY-JANE MORGAN:
46

47 MS MORGAN: Thank you, but I wasn't expecting to be heard

1 today. My name is Mary-Jane Morgan, a resident of
2 Chatswood of 37 years. Thank you, commissioners, for
3 holding this hearing today. Thank you for publishing the
4 many submissions, including mine, that indicate our
5 concerns if you go ahead and break up the Federal
6 electorate of North Sydney. I would hate this.

7
8 As an Elder, I recently reengaged in supporting young
9 community independents, supporting smart women to be
10 politically active and independent in their thinking.
11 Larissa Penn, last state elections, and then the coming
12 local government elections, mentoring Christina Dodds. I
13 am thrilled at the number of volunteers that have come
14 forward to physically give up time to support them in
15 standing for election at both State and local government,
16 and I think you are already aware of the over 1,000
17 volunteers still supporting our Federal member, a community
18 independent. Today, I think about 25 already, people, have
19 given up their day to demonstrate to you their concerns
20 about the importance of North Sydney in their life and
21 their community of interest, and I am repeating a little of
22 what they say.

23
24 I was an elected independent councillor for two terms
25 in the 1990s. This is how I learned to listen, listened to
26 my neighbours, and found my community of interest, the
27 group of concerned medical staff and potential patients who
28 are desperate to ensure no land at Royal North Shore
29 Hospital is rezoned away from the hospital and clinical
30 uses, the same Royal North Shore Hospital organisation. As
31 a daily school pick-up granny, I hear the busy parents of
32 our local schoolchildren, other grannies, and also I
33 observe and listen to our little people as they play in our
34 open spaces. I hear them all and I respect their opinions.

35
36 Since making my submission, I have continued to
37 realise our citizens know more about the local area and
38 local politics than the popular press would have us
39 believe. They are actively involved in the local area.
40 This was strongly evident when I stopped people in Lane
41 Cove Shopping Centre randomly to ask them if they knew our
42 electorate in North Sydney was to be abolished. Yes, they
43 did know, and asked me how long they had to make a
44 submission. I think it ended up being about 735.

45
46 In North Sydney, we do have an identifiably strong
47 community of interest. I am going to give you another

1 three examples of people gathering together in the last
2 month that demonstrates their active engagement in North
3 Sydney about issues of common concern. Firstly, when
4 invited to a recent community consultation on the transport
5 orientated development, "TOD" as it's known, the residents
6 of North Sydney came in droves. The two sessions held were
7 booked out as soon as the bookings opened, a little bit
8 like today. Attending one of the consultations, I was
9 delighted and astounded by the knowledge shared and
10 recorded. Subsequently, I note that the Department of
11 Planning have extended the comment period for another two
12 weeks. This consultation was about a very specific area,
13 as commented many times today: St Leonards and Crows Nest.
14 As I see your changes, the Australian Electoral Commission
15 propose to separate the community into three areas. I do
16 not think this is a good idea.

17
18 Secondly, a week ago the Bay Precinct held a meeting
19 with the North Sydney mayor to discuss local issues, first
20 re the concrete nightmare of the Warringah Freeway upgrade,
21 and the effects of transport orientated development in
22 Tunks and Cammeray parks, because of the increased
23 high-rise densities proposed. A good crowd of 60 people
24 attended in a pretty cold evening. And finally, on the
25 Willoughby City Council July 22nd meeting there were
26 dozens, maybe 70 parents, attending the discussion where
27 Willoughby City Council was proposing to vacate the
28 management of Devonshire Street child care centre. As I
29 recollect, about 40 citizens registered to speak at the
30 open forum, objecting to the council proposal. Council
31 heard three and, unwisely in my opinion, did not support
32 the parent community.

33
34 Like the five, 2,500 signature petitions and the
35 detailed submissions to you, the attendance of so many
36 people in three totally different issues concerning North
37 Sydney in the last few weeks demonstrates our strong
38 engagement by the community. My understanding is that
39 these people want to be heard by you, so again thank you
40 for calling this hearing today. We appreciate being heard,
41 even if all speaking times were allocated by 1pm yesterday,
42 hence my surprise at being heard. Good afternoon and thank
43 you again.

44
45 CHAIR: Thank you very much. I'm sorry if you were
46 surprised.

47

1 MS MORGAN: I was a bit.

2

3 CHAIR: The next speaker is Joanna Mawson-Lee.

4

5 <JOANNA MAWSON-LEE:

6

7 MS MAWSON-LEE: Good afternoon. Again, someone else out of
8 their comfort zone. My name is Joanna Mawson-Lee. I made
9 a formal submission in relation to the Warringah
10 redistribution, and I just wanted to give a more personal
11 point of view, so thank you for the opportunity. I am an
12 active member of the Warringah electorate and have lived as
13 a renter in Brookvale, Freshwater, Manly and now Balgowlah
14 in my 12 years on the Northern Beaches. I was involved in
15 the 2019 and 2022 election campaigns as a Warringah voter
16 and I can testify to the proud, vibrant community that
17 exists in Warringah. These community ties have been
18 strengthened by a Federal member's representation for our
19 area.

20

21 I've got strong links across Warringah, particularly
22 around South Curl Curl where after the death of my husband
23 six years ago, I was helped through that initial grieving
24 stage by playing beach volleyball very badly and fully
25 clothed with a group of middle-aged has-beens at South
26 Curly, which involved erecting a very old-fashioned
27 volleyball court and big, you know, wooden beams, and it
28 took 30 minutes to erect it and then if the weather was
29 really bad, we would cheerfully move up to North Curly, and
30 one of our members was part of the surf lifesaving club,
31 and he didn't even have to ask, the ties between the two
32 clubs were so strong.

33

34 So I've just become aware of how close that connection
35 was on that beach, and obviously I can't speak for the
36 club, so that's just my observation. Curl Curl is not a
37 long beach. It forms part of the popular Manly to Dee Why
38 walk, with the natural finish at Dee Why. And then Curl
39 Curl Creek, which has been called a natural boundary, has
40 sports fields on both sides. There's a tiny bridge that
41 people flow across in their thousands at the weekend, so it
42 perplexes me that it's called a boundary. And then of
43 course an enormous dog park for people walking from South
44 Curl Curl to North Curl Curl, ending there at the creek,
45 but it's just this sense of community, the two flowing
46 together. And on New Years Eve, people stream up to
47 Dee Why - notice the "up" to Dee Why - for the fireworks,

1 and I'm pretty sure they're not streaming down from
2 Collaroy on foot to Dee Why for the fireworks.

3
4 I just feel as a Warringah voter that we're being
5 pushed off the Northern Beaches, and it's very much an
6 upper Northern Beaches, lower Northern Beaches, on the
7 Northern Beaches. Sorry, I'm not following my notes.

8
9 Mackellar is very much in the upper Northern Beaches
10 electorate, which has more in common, I feel, with other
11 northern suburbs than Warringah, which we would have with
12 the inner city suburbs like North Sydney. I respectfully
13 ask that Warringah not lose its lower Northern Beaches
14 suburbs. They are a core part of our community. Like Palm
15 Beach is valued by Mackellar, Dee Why and North Curl Curl
16 are valued by Warringah. We've worked hard since 2019 in
17 Warringah to define our community and use our collective
18 voice. We generously helped other electorates to find
19 their voices at the last election, and in return it would
20 be wonderful if our community was not chopped in half and
21 half pushed off the beaches, turning it into more of an
22 inner city suburb than a Northern Beaches one.

23
24 A previous speaker mentioned the sense of community
25 along the beaches as a reason for them to be included in
26 Mackellar, but that same point can be used to say that the
27 lower beaches should not be split up. I just think we need
28 to respect the individual value and character of each
29 beach, their importance to each of the two electorates, and
30 not rip two of them out of the heart of Warringah and
31 replace them with a business district that most Warringah
32 voters have no ties with. Thank you for your time.

33
34 CHAIR: Thank you very much. The next speaker is Judi
35 Homewood.

36
37 <JUDI HOMEWOOD:

38
39 MS HOMEWOOD: Thank you, everyone, for the opportunity to
40 speak today. I am Judy. I am a long-termer, as we'd say,
41 in the electorate of North Sydney. I have lived there for
42 42 years with my partner, now my two sons, my
43 daughter-in-law and my baby granddaughter live in the
44 electorate of North Sydney. Little Eloise, I can't - she's
45 only 15 months old so she hasn't come to your attention, so
46 I can't claim to speak for her but, I do speak for my
47 family and my extended family.

1
2 I'd like to make two additional points to the three
3 points made in my objection. The first is about community
4 of interest. I assert that over time, the electorate of
5 North Sydney has become a distinct and connected community,
6 and quite different to Bradfield, Bennelong and Warringah.
7 Now, the empirical evidence for that assertion, that we
8 feel part of a distinct community is here today, is the
9 size of the response to the proposed abolition of the
10 electorate of North Sydney and the unprecedented, I would
11 have thought, take-up of opportunities to speak today,
12 despite the very short time frame. I understand slots to
13 speak today are in fact oversubscribed. So that in itself,
14 I think, speaks to the community concern for the proposal.
15

16 Clearly, many in our electorate don't want it to
17 disappear into electorates that are culturally and
18 geographically different to North Sydney. The proposal to
19 move part of North Sydney to Bradfield ignores the very
20 real fact that the Chatswood CBD is a hard divide. Some
21 call it less flattering terms than that. Anyone who has
22 driven along the Pacific Highway knows about the Chatswood
23 CBD. We in North Sydney are harbour focused and inner city
24 focused to a much greater extent than the electorate of
25 Bradfield.
26

27 As for moving parts of North Sydney to Warringah, we
28 actively campaigned against putting a tunnel to connect
29 North Sydney to Warringah. That's how much we want to be
30 part of a beach-side electorate. We are harbour and inner
31 city focused. I doubt if there is another electorate in
32 Australia where voters wouldn't welcome better connections
33 between parts of the electorate. We actively and
34 successful campaigned against it.
35

36 The connectedness of the electorate is shown by its
37 practice of electing community-focused independents. We in
38 North Sydney value that. Clearly, if the voters in
39 Bennelong and Bradfield - they could have voted in
40 community independents if they wanted to, but they haven't.
41 We've done it twice. This is about what the electorate
42 wants, not about individual MPs. The electorate of North
43 Sydney values community independence to a much greater
44 extent than Bradfield and Bennelong.
45

46 The second new objection I want to speak to is that
47 I'm now aware of the submissions by MPs Tink and Steggall,

1 which I assert provide valued and viable options to the
2 current proposal. This is not a game of numbers for us;
3 it's about our community. So, I respectfully request you
4 reconsider the proposal to abolish the electorate of North
5 Sydney. I thank you for your time today.

6
7 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is
8 Matthew McKay.

9
10 <MATTHEW McKAY:

11
12 MR McKAY: Thank you very much, committee, for the
13 opportunity to talk to you. And I also acknowledge the
14 very difficult job that you have trying to sort all of this
15 out. Look, there has been many sensible submissions
16 against the proposed abolition of North Sydney Council and
17 North Sydney LGA, and I can only support the submissions
18 made specifically by the sitting member, Ms Tink, but also
19 Ben Wilson who spoke just before lunch. I think they are
20 practical solutions and they suggest - I agree with and I
21 can't - I won't bang on about the same points, other than
22 to say that I wholeheartedly support them in their
23 opposition.

24
25 CHAIR: Just before we any further, I don't think you
26 stated your name at the beginning.

27
28 MR McKAY: I do beg your pardon, madam. My name is
29 Matthew McKay, and I am a part of this community. I have
30 been since 1990 when we were first married. As every part
31 of this community that I am immersed in, be it schooling,
32 working, socialising, eating, drinking, shopping. Nearly
33 everything is done within this LGA, and you'd have to blast
34 us out.

35
36 What I would like to talk about is our sense of
37 community that very much makes up this. Having been part
38 of this community in my neighbourhood, which is very close,
39 I can say with complete confidence that we are an eclectic
40 community, with a very strong social licence. We have a
41 very proud history of voting for our electoral rights and
42 voting out those that choose not to heed that. We are not
43 a community that just accepts the two-party duopoly of
44 power in politics and we have demonstrated that on many
45 occasions at the ballot box in the past, and I would like
46 to acknowledge Claire Finch, who spoke earlier, about the
47 politicisation of this decision. Effectively, they're

1 trying to make us exactly what we do not want to be. We
2 don't vote on party loyalty, we vote on local and national
3 constituent concerns. And I'm sure that you have seen the
4 level of opposition to this change as an indication that we
5 are a politically aware, mature and informed community in
6 this respect.

7
8 So it's no surprise - well, it was no surprise, I
9 suppose, if you consider the recent referendum or indeed
10 the plebiscite from years before, that North Sydney very
11 much came out strongly in favour of social progression and
12 it always has, as opposed to division and exclusion. So it
13 was exactly this sense of community, and community
14 belonging, that grew a true grassroots movement to elect
15 our current member in the House of Representatives. Not
16 only could we sense the need for change, but we could sense
17 how to do it and we had the social cohesion to make it
18 work, and it was a huge community effort and a great source
19 of pride when it did.

20
21 I mean, thousands of people, literally thousands of
22 people, were out walking the streets, doorknocking,
23 letterboxing. They continued to do just that, providing
24 listening posts, welcoming new constituents, helping in the
25 MP office, attending to constituent matters, attending
26 every single community function and event that occurs, and
27 basically giving out huge amounts of volunteering time to
28 progress democracy as we see it should happen. Forgive my
29 egotistical belief, but I think we are a great microcosm of
30 how democracy was meant to be, and not as a by-product of a
31 two-party power-sharing.

32
33 So, no surprises, we were utterly appalled and galled
34 at the thought of having this all taken away from us.
35 Perhaps more than other communities, we appreciate the need
36 for change, but we don't accept that the proposed changes
37 necessarily progress the correct electoral reform. Our
38 sense of community gain through electoral successes will be
39 lost, we believe, with this proposed change.

40
41 Whilst you could argue we just should go somewhere
42 else and recreate that sense of community, it's not going
43 to happen. I mean, I'm a long-time resident of Crows Nest
44 who are about to be smashed three ways. I have got no
45 interest in community issues in Manly and I'm not going to
46 participate in them. Same-same a business in North Sydney
47 that is having VISA issues with workers is going to wonder

1 where it's prioritised among environmental issues that
2 might be occurring in Dee Why. The fact is you can't
3 simply stitch together apples and oranges for statistically
4 convenient purposes, and yet that appears to us the way
5 it's going, and we object most strenuously about it.
6

7 Why should we have to change? We created something
8 good. We think it should be preserved and not removed by a
9 bureaucratic process. You only have to look at the amount
10 of extra growth and housing that's coming into the area to
11 understand surely it's better for democracy for new
12 residents to be parachuted into a community filled with
13 engaged and inclusive constituents rather than an
14 indifferent collection of hamlets with competing
15 priorities.
16

17 I will conclude by again thanking the Committee for
18 your hard work, and please implore you to consider it's not
19 just about population growth and history and, you know, a
20 geographic common sense and so on and so forth, but it's
21 that sense of community that's been created within our
22 community that we feel is critical, and not the bordering
23 LGAs that have their own social dynamics. I implore you to
24 consider this in your decision-making. Thank you for your
25 time.
26

27 CHAIR: Thank you very much. The next speaker will be
28 Gayle Peres da Costa.
29

30 <GAYLE PERES DA COSTA:
31

32 MS DA COSTA: Good afternoon. My name is Gayle Peres
33 da Costa. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I
34 do appreciate the role of AEC in our democracy and I am
35 grateful for this process.
36

37 I have been living in the electorate of North Sydney
38 for the past 26 years, first in Artarmon and now in
39 Castlecrag. I've raised four children, which has led me to
40 be a parent at the schools in the electorate of North
41 Sydney for the past 25 years. My involvement in the
42 community outside of schools has included sporting teams,
43 community band, community choirs, local fairs and the
44 parish of St Mary's North Sydney. But under the proposed
45 changes, I would be moved to the electorate of Bradfield.
46 I have no connections whatsoever to the area of Bradfield.
47 In fact, I rarely drive North of Castlecrag.

1
2 I had not been particularly interested in politics
3 until 2021. I have never been partisan. I was and still
4 are a swinging voter, deciding on issues that were
5 important to me at each election, but when I read about
6 Kylea Tink planning to run as an independent Member for
7 North Sydney, she inspired me and I immediately volunteered
8 to help her. I had been despondent about party
9 representatives and was excited to potentially have a
10 member who was truly representative of the community and
11 not required to toe the party line. I was one of the army
12 of volunteers who helped get Kylea elected, handing out
13 flyers and doorknocking in our pink T-shirts, and I'm ready
14 to do it all again.
15

16 I have been so proud to have Kylea represent me in
17 Parliament. I've become passionate about the quality of
18 our representation instead of despondent. It defies belief
19 that after the community has come together so strongly to
20 elect an independent candidate, something that has been
21 historically so hard to do that she could be removed from
22 Parliament, not because she's not doing a good job, because
23 she is doing a great job, but because her seat could just
24 vanish. And so, I am here to ask you not to abolish the
25 seat of North Sydney when there are clearly other options
26 available.
27

28 And I want you to know that when I was recently
29 handing out flyers and seeking petitions outside North
30 Sydney produce markets on a Saturday morning, I was
31 overwhelmed by the support of strangers that I approached,
32 saying exactly the same thing, saying, "How could this
33 happen? How could we have created this environment and
34 have this fantastic independent and then have her just
35 pulled from under us?" We couldn't have anticipated how
36 much support there was and how many people wanted to sign
37 petitions. We ran out of flyers.
38

39 So since sending in my written objection, I have had
40 the opportunity to read many of the objections made to the
41 Commission, and I would now like to make two additional
42 points. The first, though I am not any sort of
43 statistician, is based on everything that I have read, and
44 it is now clear to me that the population of North Sydney
45 on its current boundaries is growing, not declining. If
46 that's correct, then with the greatest respect, the AEC
47 seems to have failed to consult the appropriate sources for

1 future growth, and it seems that at the projection date in
2 2028, North Sydney will have acquired the number of
3 electors that is required. And on that basis, I would just
4 urge the Commission to change its decision and to leave the
5 electorate of North Sydney as it is.

6
7 Secondly, from a purely selfish perspective, I do not
8 want to lose the electorate of North Sydney. It means
9 something to me that we are one of the original electorates
10 formed at Federation. I feel that we have a unique
11 character and we have a unique community that I feel part
12 of. I don't feel that my interested will be represented by
13 the minister for Bradfield, but more importantly I am
14 concerned about the economic impact of splitting up a
15 fast-growing business community at Crows Nest St Leonards
16 across three electorates, to be managed by three different
17 members. That can't be in anybody's interests. Crows Nest
18 St Leonards is set to grow into another massive CBD with
19 the metro that's about to open, and this community deserves
20 the opportunity to be nurtured by one focused
21 representative, rather than be pulled apart in three
22 different directions by three representatives with
23 competing interests. How can it possibly flourish under
24 those circumstances?

25
26 I appreciate that the Commission has a difficult task
27 ahead of it. I know that you have a number of matters to
28 consider. I am here to ask you, please, in making your
29 decision, to focus less on the statistics and to focus
30 above all on the economic and social interests, the
31 community interests, of the North Sydney electorate. Thank
32 you for your time.

33
34 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The final - no, there
35 are two more speakers. Margaret Stoneman. And the speaker
36 after that is Christopher McLelland.

37
38 <MARGARET STONEMAN:

39
40 MS STONEMAN: Good afternoon. I am Margaret Stoneman. As
41 a longstanding resident of North Sydney, I am dismayed by
42 the proposal to abolish our exceptionally cohesive
43 electorate and to distribute its literally dismembered
44 parts between three disparate neighbouring electorates, in
45 the process cleaving through its commercial and community
46 heart, with no apparent rationale. This leaves the
47 constituents of our dense inner urban electorate

1 languishing at the periphery of suburban electorates with
2 very different lifestyle values.

3
4 As a mathematician with long experience in
5 forecasting, I cannot reconcile the AEC's projection that
6 the North Sydney electoral roll will shrink over the
7 projected period in 2028, not with its own gazetted data,
8 not with ABS estimated resident population data, not with
9 New South Wales planning department's data and projections
10 using the same method, and not with any detectable
11 comparability in extrapolation method between North Sydney,
12 Warringah, Mackellar, Bradfield and Berowra.

13
14 It seems the AEC has overlaid ABS extrapolated
15 population growth rates based on 2021 data onto enrolment
16 figures as at 9 August 2023, in a period when inner urban
17 population base changes were atypically erratic due to the
18 exogenous COVID shock and its subsequent unwinding. This
19 alone would produce perverse outcomes, relative to more
20 representative underlying medium-term trends. The shock
21 hit North Sydney disproportionately in population shifts
22 but not electoral enrolment, the former reflecting sharp
23 declines in numbers of foreign students and net overseas
24 migration, while the eligible population of voting age
25 continued to grow, not fall.

26
27 This is not captured accurately in the translation
28 between population extrapolations to actual enrolment,
29 leading to distorted enrolment projections. It is equally
30 anomalous that enrolments in the sister electorates of
31 Mackellar and Warringah have risen at the same rate since
32 the last redistribution, yet Mackellar's enrolment is
33 projected to suddenly shoot up by 5.61 per cent while
34 Warringah stagnates at 0.91 per cent. Unlikely.

35
36 Some quick facts: far from declining over the next
37 four years, the gazetted enrolment of North Sydney has
38 already grown by 1.05 per cent in just the first nine
39 months. It is well on the way to surpassing the
40 3.85 per cent increase recorded in the 55 months to August
41 '23, a period equating to the AEC's forecast horizon.

42
43 Since the previous electoral redistribution, North
44 Sydney's enrolment has grown by 7.84 per cent, much faster
45 than any other northern Sydney division. You would not
46 know that from the enrolment projections in the
47 redistribution proposal before the inquiry. In those

1 projections, ours is the only one in that group to fall, by
2 0.06 per cent, while Mackellar and Berowra are expected to
3 suddenly double their enrolment growth, in Mackellar's case
4 to a rate that is an unlikely 3.5 times faster than NSW
5 Planning projects for the LGA in which it is incorporated.
6

7 I note that there are 17 electorates further below the
8 AEC quota benchmark for the existing role than North
9 Sydney. 12 are urban, the star underperformer being
10 Wentworth, at 14 per cent below target, with Warringah
11 second-last. While it is the enrolment data that directly
12 determines redistribution parameters, it is instructive to
13 consider underlying population growth as well. Between
14 pre-COVID 2018 and 2023, the latest ABS data show North
15 Sydney's population rose by almost 1 per cent, despite
16 taking a 2.8 per cent hit from COVID disruption in 2021.
17 The populations of Mackellar and Warringah fell. Our trend
18 growth is also higher.
19

20 By any past performance criteria, there is no reason
21 to single out North Sydney for abolition, particularly
22 after adjustment for obvious anomalies in the enrolment
23 projections in light of the actual gazetted enrolment data.
24 The only apparent rationale is to boost the flagging rolls
25 of the much slower-growing neighbours. There is a deep
26 iniquity in that.
27

28 In a nutshell, with modest realignments in its
29 boundaries to correspond in full with just three of its
30 constituent LGAs, North Sydney, Lane Cove and Willoughby,
31 the Division of North Sydney would easily achieve the
32 required quotas, both current and future.
33

34 A quick correction, if I may. My submission proof
35 check was interrupted by a calving emergency. I had to hit
36 send before seeing my typos of "27,787", instead of
37 "2,787", and "Bradfield" instead of "Mackellar" in the last
38 sentence of the second para under my second table in
39 COB212. The calving had a happy ending. We are hoping
40 this inquiry does too. Thank you for your reconsideration.
41

42 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. Can I ask you when
43 this is over perhaps to speak to Ms Taylor about some of
44 those figures?
45

46 MS STONEMAN: Happy to. It's all from officially
47 published data.

1
2 MR ROGERS: If you'd hand the notes over, that would be
3 really useful.

4
5 MS STONEMAN: Okay. Lovely.

6
7 CHAIR: Mr McLelland.

8
9 <CHRISTOPHER McLELLAND:

10
11 MR McLELLAND: Thank you. Good afternoon. My name is
12 Christopher McLelland, and like the others, I appreciate
13 the opportunity to address the panel. You're doing a great
14 job.

15
16 Now, I am arguing to keep the Federation Division of
17 North Sydney in its current location, with peripheral
18 adjustments to its boundaries only. In light of the AEC
19 criteria of maintaining community of interest test of the
20 cohesiveness and integrity of the communities that
21 constitute the electorates, both individually and as a
22 whole, and allowing the natural geographic features to be
23 an important determinant in establishing its boundaries, I
24 am proposing that this division embrace the entirety of its
25 constituent local government areas of North Sydney,
26 Willoughby, Lane Cove and Hunters Hill. All these LGAs
27 share the commonality and natural features of being
28 long-established historical inner metropolitan harbourside
29 areas. This is logical, because councils are the nucleus
30 around which communities coalesce and connect. Maintaining
31 these areas intact within the division is critical to
32 ensuring its integrity and to retain the important vertical
33 integration from local to Federal representation which best
34 addresses the electorate's concerns and interests.

35
36 Now, how does this work demographically? Well, the
37 clearly observable reality is that housing within the
38 division has been growing at an accelerating rate over
39 recent years. The AEC's enrolment data confirms this. The
40 densest of these developments are centred around the key
41 transport hubs of North Sydney, Crows Nest, St Leonards and
42 Chatswood. More are coming on screen right now, and also
43 in the pipeline with the new completed metro. Rezoning
44 legislation now passed will stimulate this growth even more
45 into the future.

46
47 Based on New South Wales government forward

1 projections to 2028, 5,600 new homes are to be built in the
2 North Sydney LGA, 3,400 new homes in Lane Cove, 1,700 new
3 homes in Willoughby, 400 new homes in Hunters Hill. This
4 would increase by a further 2,000 when extending the
5 boundaries of the division to be totally inclusive of the
6 above LGAs, a total of approximately 14,000 new homes. Add
7 in the planned intensification of revised zoning laws
8 encouraging the entirety of 12 residential areas not
9 already zoned as multi-storey residential to be redeveloped
10 up to seven storeys, irrespective of its environmental or
11 heritage impact. These are North Sydney, Kirribilli,
12 Milsons Point, Lavender Bay, McMahons Point, Crows Nest,
13 St Leonards, Naremburn, Waverton, Wollstonecraft,
14 Willoughby and West Cammeray.

15
16 On this trajectory, the population would reach, if not
17 exceed, the AEC's generic quota range by 2028 and beyond.
18 Analysis of existing data revealed in COB212 underscores
19 this. Another important distinguishing characteristic of
20 North Sydney is the inclination of its constituents, when
21 the opportunity presents, to elect an independent to
22 represent the community interest rather than vote
23 ideologically for a major political party. This has
24 occurred regularly at local government and Federal level
25 since the 1990s. Disenfranchising the electorate of this
26 current benefit would be a great disservice to grassroots
27 democracy. None of the other suggestions or objections
28 proposing either elimination of the division or
29 irrationally manipulating boundaries to achieve political
30 objectives have the clarity and logic of keeping this
31 well-defined and established electorate intact, or
32 recognise the importance of the cohesion of its constituent
33 communities, severing its community of interest.

34
35 Historically, cities grow concentrically. Heartwood
36 differentiates itself from sapwood. This is evident in the
37 cosmopolitan nature of the Division of North Sydney, and in
38 its distinction from the surrounding distinctions to which
39 it is proposed to be contortedly carved up and relegated.
40 On the grounds of equity and logic, it is essential that
41 the Division of North Sydney is retained where it is, in
42 essence following the suggestion 22 by our local MP.
43 Should its abolition be the consequence of a statistical
44 error in population growth projections or a quirk in time
45 of setting base data markers, as pointed out by others,
46 this would be a short-sighted and absolute travesty. Thank
47 you.

1
2 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. In case you're
3 wondering why the pause, it was arranged, I think, that
4 Ms Sophie Scamps, the MP for Mackellar, speak by way of
5 video at this time, and there's an issue with the
6 connections.

7
8 <DR SOPHIE SCAMPS:

9
10 DR SCAMPS: Thank you. Good afternoon. My name is
11 Dr Sophie Scamps, and I would like to thank the Australian
12 Electoral Commission for the opportunity to present today
13 as the Member for Mackellar. Australia is indeed extremely
14 fortunate to have an independent electoral commission.

15
16 I was deeply saddened by the proposed abolishment of
17 the seat of North Sydney, which is represented so
18 powerfully by my good friend and cross-bench colleague,
19 Kylea Tink MP. As the elected representative of Mackellar
20 and a community independent, I promise to genuinely
21 represent the best interests of the people of Mackellar
22 first and foremost, and so, I would like to state that I
23 strongly support the AEC's draft proposal to move
24 Mackellar's southern boundary further south.

25
26 These changes adhere to the four key criteria within
27 the Electoral Act. On the other hand, I strongly object to
28 any suggestion that the western boundary of Mackellar move
29 further westward to incorporate St Ives and St Ives Chase.
30 Such suggestions have overwhelmingly come from people
31 living outside of Mackellar and do not consider the best
32 interests of the people of Mackellar.

33
34 I spent 25 years living in Turrumurra, the suburb next
35 door to St Ives, when I was growing up, and I have spent
36 the last 25 years living and working in Mackellar. One
37 thing I know without a doubt, and have confirmed again and
38 again through innumerable conversations, is that the people
39 of both the upper North Sydney and the Northern Beaches
40 regard the two communities as clearly separate and
41 distinct. I refer to the submission of the mayor of
42 Ku-ring-gai which supports this assertion.

43
44 Add to this the fact that since the seat of Mackellar
45 was created in 1949, the residential parts of St Ives have
46 never been a part of Mackellar. On the other hand, the
47 localities of Killarney Heights, Forestville, North Curl

1 Curl and all of Dee Why to the south have all been
2 transferred in and out of Mackellar at various times since
3 1949. Extending the electorate of Mackellar south is the
4 only logical and fair outcome when considered against the
5 four Electoral Act criteria for designing electoral
6 division boundaries.

7
8 I will now speak to these four criteria. Firstly,
9 maintaining communities of interest. St Ives is a part of
10 the Upper North Shore and Mackellar is a part of Northern
11 Beaches. The Upper North Shore, including St Ives and
12 Mackellar, are different separate communities with little
13 linking them. They have different councils, different
14 sporting competitions, different school catchments,
15 different shopping centres and regions, different and
16 unrelated business precincts, separate and poorly-linked
17 public transport networks, different hospital catchments
18 and they are even served by different divisions of the
19 Rural Fire Service. Importantly, Mackellar has an
20 incredibly strong Surf Life Saving culture, which is one of
21 the defining characters of our community, and our 15 surf
22 clubs are an important factor in uniting and linking
23 Mackellar communities. The surf club connections also
24 create strong links between Mackellar and the coastal
25 communities of our Warringah neighbours to the south.

26
27 Two, the physical features of a proposed division.
28 St Ives and St Ives Chase are separated from Mackellar by
29 both distance and major topographical features, including
30 the Garigal and Ku-ring-gai national parks and Cowan and
31 Middle Harbour creeks. Since 1949, these natural and
32 topographical barriers have formed a clear, major boundary
33 between the electorates of Mackellar and Bradfield.

34
35 Three, transport connections. The public transport
36 links between St Ives and the rest of Mackellar are very
37 weak. The only public transport service linking the two
38 regions is an infrequent bus service between St Ives and
39 Mona Vale, which runs every half hour at most during the
40 day. There are no direct public transport links between
41 St Ives and Frenchs Forest or St Ives and the southern
42 parts of Mackellar. For travel to the city, St Ives and
43 the Northern Beaches are served by separate and poorly
44 interconnected transport lines, St Ives being served by
45 Pacific Highway and North Shore train line, and the
46 Northern Beaches being served by Pittwater Road and the
47 B-Line bus service along the coastline.

1
2 I strongly welcome the committee's decision in the
3 draft to keep Mackellar wholly within the Northern Beaches
4 Council area as the most sensible and workable outcome.
5 The trial proposal was also very welcome, as it fixed the
6 problem of the suburbs of Dee Why, Frenchs Forest and
7 Forestville being split between two electorates, by
8 bringing them wholly within Mackellar. It makes the most
9 logical sense for Dee Why to come wholly within Mackellar,
10 as it is very strongly affiliated with its close Mackellar
11 neighbours, including Collaroy, Long Reef, Narraweena and
12 Cromer. These suburbs have strong economic ties and share
13 shopping precincts and places to socialise.

14
15 Dee Why, on the other hand, has very little
16 affiliation or links with the lower North Shore suburbs of
17 Warringah, including Neutral Bay and Mosman, with very
18 different socioeconomic and cultural demographic, different
19 economic zones and disparate shopping and socialising
20 precincts. On behalf the people of Mackellar, I therefore
21 strongly object to any suggestion that the boundary of
22 Mackellar be moved westward to incorporate St Ives or
23 St Ives Chase. This is not in the best interests of either
24 the communities of St Ives or Mackellar. Thank you very
25 much for your time.

26
27 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed and for giving us your
28 time.

29
30 DR SCAMPS: Thank you.

31
32 CHAIR: I think we'll take a 5 minute break at this point,
33 and then after that, the first speaker should be Remko
34 Tan - does that make sense? Remko? Remko, you're first
35 after the break.

36
37 SHORT ADJOURNMENT

38
39 CHAIR: All right. Well, we've had a brief break. Can I
40 ask Remko to come forward.

41
42 <REMKO TEN BRUGGENCATE:

43
44 MR BRUGGENCATE: Thank you, committee, for taking the time
45 to listen to me. My name is Remko Ten Bruggencate. I am a
46 resident of Wollstonecraft and I have lived in Neutral Bay,
47 Crows Nest and Wollstonecraft for the last 25 years. I

1 have a strong connection with the area, both economically
2 and socially, and I have to say that because my speech
3 would repeat many of the arguments that have been made
4 before here, I will leave that and do a bit of an
5 off-the-cuff speech. It is my opinion that the draft
6 proposal that has been prepared by the Committee is not in
7 the best interest of the people of North Sydney, and I am
8 therefore speaking against the abolition of the seat.

9
10 For the electorate to be split up over across three
11 different electorates, Bradfield, Warringah and Bennelong,
12 is clearly not in the best interest of the - all of the
13 community. And the strength of that community was to me
14 shown in 2021 when out of the blue the community got
15 together and decided to form a force that eventually
16 elected Kylea Tink as our representative. Kylea has been a
17 strong community representative, and we would like to
18 maintain that. So I strongly support your argument that
19 North Sydney, St Leonards and Chatswood would remain as one
20 social, economic and recreational hub, and for it not to be
21 split. North Sydney is a growth area, with many high
22 density and medium density developments either planned or
23 under construction. I strongly support the objection OB686
24 from Kylea Tink, which I believe offers a very credible,
25 well-researched, alternative proposal, with outcomes that
26 meet the criteria of the Commonwealth Electoral Act.

27
28 To get an idea about how my fellow residents in the
29 area felt about the proposal, I decided to ask quite a few
30 of them what they thought. I asked about 50 people. The
31 good thing about that was that most of the people knew that
32 there was an electoral redistribution plan being put
33 forward. Very few of them knew that that would actually
34 mean the abolishment of the seat of North Sydney. Of the
35 people who did know, it was almost universal that people
36 thought that it would not be in the best interest of our
37 community. And while this straw poll of about 50 people
38 may not be representative of the whole of the electorate,
39 it gave me, definitely, a good sense of where the community
40 sits on this issue.

41
42 So, may I strongly suggest that the Committee
43 reconsiders their draft determination to abolish North
44 Sydney. It's a growth area. It is important that it stays
45 as one community and as one electorate. Thank you.

46
47 CHAIR: Thank you very much, Remko. The next person

1 I would call upon is Jill Newton.

2

3 <JILL NEWTON:

4

5 MS NEWTON: Thank you for the opportunity to add additional
6 comments to my OB720 and COB133 to the proposal to abolish
7 the Federal Division of North Sydney. My name is Jill
8 Newton. I have lived for over 25 years in Castlecrag,
9 which is in the Division of North Sydney. I am devastated
10 at and object to the proposal to abolish the Division of
11 North Sydney and split the community asunder into three.
12 With the greatest respect, I think this proposal fails due
13 to the use of faulty demographic projections, a failure to
14 properly consider the community of interest test, and the
15 abolition of North Sydney being incredibly inequitable.

16

17 There is no real reason I can see why it's proposed to
18 abolish North Sydney. In its report, the AEC says nothing
19 much about why it should be the one to go. Nothing indeed
20 is said about how North Sydney measures up in the community
21 of interest test. I'm aware this inquiry is not an inquiry
22 into the AEC's reasons for the proposed distribution, but I
23 think this is most unfortunate. The AEC's reasoning is the
24 elephant in the room. I think it's absolutely necessary.
25 Transparency of institutional processes is an essential
26 feature in a democracy, so the public can still view the
27 AEC as a trustworthy institution working above and beyond
28 politics and in other words working for the public
29 interest.

30

31 I'll direct my submission now to what I believe are
32 the reasons behind the proposal to abolish and split the
33 Division of North Sydney asunder into three other divisions
34 and why I think this is based on false premises.

35

36 One, the AEC's predicted enrolment as at 10 April 2028
37 of the Division North Sydney under its current boundaries
38 is a fallacy. I have already given reasons in my objection
39 OB720 and comment COB133 for the proposition that the
40 population of North Sydney under its current boundaries is
41 in fact growing, not falling. So how, then, did the AEC
42 get to produce such flawed figures for its projected
43 electoral enrolment as at 10 April 2028, in relation at
44 least to the Division of North Sydney, in which it says it
45 was minus 13.16 per cent variation from the projected
46 enrolment quota, and it gave the division a projected
47 negative growth of minus 0.06.

1
2 This flies in the face of reality to those of us on
3 the ground in North Sydney, as everybody has been telling
4 you, but even so these flawed figures and the projected
5 enrolments of the Division of North Sydney is still closer
6 to the quota than, say, Bradfield, Berowra, Warringah or
7 Wentworth, which go from minus 15.51 per cent to minus
8 21.01 per cent, and even the PM's seat of Grayndler, which
9 heavens above is only, minus 14.02 per cent. Why weren't
10 any of these targeted for the chop rather than North
11 Sydney, I ask?

12
13 Margaret Stoneman has just discussed today that the
14 actual AEC enrolment data proves the AEC's projected
15 decline of 0.06 for North Sydney is based on a fallacy.
16 Also her OB720 and COB212. Please read these thoroughly.
17 They are absolutely critical, I think. Margaret is an
18 economist. She used to work at the Reserve Bank. I don't
19 know if she has told you this, but she is absolutely
20 spot-on and please read them.

21
22 In summary, the actual AEC data now shows that since
23 the AEC base date in 2023, the Division of North Sydney has
24 grown by 1.05 per cent, a rate of 1.3 per cent per annum.
25 This false projected decline of 0.06 per cent may have
26 alerted the AEC to focus on North Sydney for abolition.

27
28 Secondly, the other reason is I think it could be the
29 Liberal party 's suggestion to abolish the seat or division
30 of North Sydney. I know parties and candidates put forward
31 their suggestions about carving up the electoral pie for
32 redistribution. The major parties only have the resources
33 and expertise for conducting maps and statistics to best
34 determine their preferences. Others don't. No party is
35 going to suggest a scenario that goes against its electoral
36 interests, are they? I hope and trust that the AEC does
37 its own determination based on its own maps and statistics,
38 and isn't too influenced by an one proposal of a major
39 party so as to ensure politics is kept out of the equation.

40
41 This is correct, isn't it? Please tell us if it
42 isn't; it should be disclosed. Having looked at the
43 Liberal party's suggestion 47 and its objection 578, I am
44 really concerned that in this case the AEC may have
45 followed the Liberal party's suggestion in S47 to a T.

46
47 I once again refer to Margaret Stoneman's COB202 at

1 pages 3 and 4, under the heading "Similarity between the
2 AEC's proposed redistribution and the Liberal party's
3 suggestion 47." On the face of the Liberal party's S47,
4 it's very easy to miss its suggestion to abolish and carve
5 up into three the Division of North Sydney. For example, I
6 refer the panel to the first two recommendations on page 13
7 of suggestion 46. It's that the Division of North Sydney
8 and Warringah be combined into one division to be then
9 North Sydney, with the Federation division name to be
10 retained, but the divisional name of Warringah not be
11 retained.

12
13 Finally, I refer to the Liberal party's one-page
14 objection 578. The fact that the Liberal party could find
15 nothing it would like to have modified in the AEC's
16 proposed distribution report contrasts with that of the
17 Labour party, the Greens and even the National party. The
18 constant reference to providing divisions and naming of
19 Warringah "North Sydney", et cetera, I think shows that
20 there's been confusion.

21
22 And this is compounded in table F of the AEC's
23 distribution report. I haven't got time to talk about it
24 now, but the Liberal party doesn't appear under those
25 suggesting the Division of North Sydney should be
26 abolished. The AEC isn't proposing a name change, but
27 apart from that, its redistribution is uncannily similar to
28 that proposed in section 47, as Margaret Stoneman has shown
29 in her table at page 4 of the COB212.

30
31 Abolishing North Sydney is inequitable. You'll have
32 to forgive me, but the whole process to abolish our North
33 Sydney division and divide us into three is very
34 inequitable. Why North Sydney with our current electoral
35 population and predicted strong growth? It looks like
36 North Sydney and our community is the sacrificial lamb to
37 make our more NIMBY neighbouring divisions stay intact.

38
39 Two, the fact that the Liberal party suggested this
40 very same proposal as the AEC to abolish and carve North
41 Sydney division into three is a clear red flag to me.

42
43 Three, the two seats that Australia is losing in this
44 redistribution are held by women. One women is an elected
45 independent MP; they are as rare as rare as hen's teeth.
46 And the other is a Labor MP. Surely based on House of Rep
47 numbers, it would be more equitable to lose one Labor and

1 one Liberal seat.

2

3 Action: on this basis alone, due to the AEC's
4 incorrect projected enrolments, as of 10 April 2028, I ask
5 for this redistribution to be reassessed. For North Sydney
6 division, my suggestion is to leave it basically intact but
7 with some tweaking at the edges to include the whole of
8 Willoughby, Lane Cove and North Sydney LGAs as shown by
9 Margaret Stoneman in COB212, a more accurate enrolment
10 prediction as at 2028, April 2028, as well and truly fits
11 within the quota. Thank you very much.

12

13 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. Next speaker, John
14 Turnbull.

15

16 <JOHN TURNBULL:

17

18 MR TURNBULL: Thank you, members of the Committee. My name
19 is John Turnbull. I live in Mona Vale and have done for
20 over 30 years, and am a very happy resident of Mackellar.
21 I heard Dr Scamps, who is my local Federal member talking
22 on the telephone a few minutes ago. May I say, I
23 wholeheartedly support what she says. I provided a
24 submission a while ago opposing what I will refer to as the
25 Tinks-Stegall proposal that Mackellar be extended west to
26 St Ives and Warringah North, into what is currently
27 Mackellar.

28

29 I support the Australian Electoral Commission's
30 decision that has been put out. I think taking into
31 account - taking Dee Why into Mackellar is an obvious thing
32 to do. At the end of the day, Dee Why is a large,
33 commercial precinct in Mackellar. Well, at the moment in
34 Mackellar and Warringah. It should be in one area, as it
35 is for the local government.

36

37 Can I say this, though. If the Committee was minded
38 to not abolish North Sydney, there is of course an
39 alternative that's been raised, I've seen in some of these
40 submissions, and that is to extend Mackellar down to Manly.
41 These are beaches suburbs. The beaches are an integral
42 part of what we love about the area, and of course the
43 beaches extend from Manly to Palm Beach. We have, as it
44 turns out, a council that pretty much covers that area as
45 well. The beaches are all linked by Barrenjoey and
46 Pittwater roads. It's the same road for much of the way.
47 We have commonality in lifestyles, we have a common

1 interest in maintaining the beaches and the clubs that form
2 a very important part of it. So, insofar as the Committee
3 looks at what is common in the communities, the beaches is
4 very much - when I say "the beaches", literally the beaches
5 and the clubs that go with it - are very much part of it.
6

7 By contrast, if Mackellar was forced to take the
8 proposal put forward by others that North Sydney stay,
9 Warringah extend north into what is now Mackellar,
10 Mackellar then has to take into account St Ives. There
11 are, as you have heard, not one but two national forests,
12 national parks, between where I live, Mona Vale, and
13 St Ives. They are clearly places that don't have a
14 commonality of interest. It's just madness to suggest that
15 that's what should occur. The AEC has not sought to do
16 that, and in my respectful submission, for very good
17 reason.
18

19 I've heard a lot of your speakers today and of course
20 there is a lot of disappointment that Ms Tink will lose her
21 seat. That of course, is not a matter that you should take
22 into account. And so far as it's suggested that there is,
23 in North Sydney, an inner city harbour lifestyle, I frankly
24 find that, and I imagine you will as well, hard to believe
25 that suburbs like St Leonards, Crows Nest and Castlecrag
26 could be said to be inner city suburbs.
27

28 Finally, can I just say this. A lot of people have
29 talked about if you abolish North Sydney, if you make these
30 changes, there will be changes to the community and the
31 community groups. It's not going to stop anybody. If you
32 change the electoral boundaries, of course, as you well
33 know, it's not going to stop anybody going to their
34 preferred restaurant and that sort of thing. It's not
35 going to change where you live; it's simply going to change
36 who you vote for.
37

38 And finally, I want to say this. I have also heard
39 criticism of the underlying numbers that the commissioners
40 no doubt looked at in terms of future population growth.
41 The Commission of course must make projections based on
42 what you accept as being the appropriate numbers underlying
43 population growth. I assume you have terrific resources,
44 and I have every confidence in your decision, but of course
45 one needs to make projections. Projections are looking in
46 a crystal ball, bringing together all of the information
47 and making that projection. Just because there are

1 alternatives that might be suggested, may I say you should
2 not be deterred from your path. Thank you very much for
3 your time.

4
5 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is
6 Michael Fong.

7
8 <MICHAEL FONG:

9
10 MR FONG: Good afternoon. My name is Michael Fong and
11 thank you to the augmented Electoral Commission of New
12 South Wales for this opportunity to speak and to add to my
13 written submission which I made back in, I think, on
14 11 July.

15
16 I come from a humble beginnings, born and raised in
17 Sydney's inner west, the smallest of five children to a
18 fruit shop owner and later a cafe owner. I must admit, I
19 knew nothing of the other side of the Harbour Bridge during
20 the 50s and 60s when I grew up. During the 70s, though, I
21 discovered that there are beaches on the other side of the
22 harbour, very nice ones indeed. The air was notably
23 cleaner. The residents were friendly and relaxed. I
24 promised myself then, at that very early time, that this is
25 the place that one day I will raise a family.

26
27 I married in 1987 and rented in Forestville and later
28 in Lane Cove until I did in fact buy my own house in
29 Forestville in 1999. My brother had already made the move
30 there to Killarney Heights in the 80s. All my three adult
31 children attended Forestville Public School and Killarney
32 Heights High School. They all shared the same kindy
33 teacher, Mrs Law. My eldest daughter moved out and rented
34 in Dee Why for several years before purchasing in St Ives.
35 She loves Dee Why and the surrounding beaches, and there is
36 the yearly fight over who gets the second parking permit.

37
38 My son moved to Lane Cove two years ago. I see him
39 every second or third day to babysit my grandson. He, too,
40 loves Forestville. It's his childhood home and he recalls
41 memories with fondness to his wife. My brother, his wife
42 and his family of three now-adult children also live close
43 by, now in Killarney Heights. His family followed a
44 similar path, with all three children attending Forestville
45 Public School and Killarney Heights High School. I have in
46 total eight nieces and nephews that all attended Killarney
47 Heights High School. My family is very connected to the

1 Forestville 2087. I am proud to say that all these young
2 adults have now become gainfully employed and contribute to
3 our society in diversity, imagination, innovation, and
4 fiscally through taxes. Warringah provided them the
5 platform through for which to grow and develop.
6

7 I joined Australia Post in 1994 as a postman, rising
8 through the ranks to become a delivery manager at Dee Why
9 in 1997, then becoming assistant manager for the North
10 Sydney delivery centre from the 2001 to 2007, and lastly as
11 a production manager at St Leonards delivery facility until
12 2013 when I retired. I gained an insight into the distinct
13 differences of demographics of both Warringah and North
14 Sydney, Warringah being the haven for young and old, with a
15 relaxed lifestyle and a community yearning for something
16 better, an alternative. Losing Warringah would diminish
17 the creativity that New South Wales requires.
18

19 Then there's the high-powered corporate world of North
20 Sydney. There's a community of citizens who are interested
21 in democracy and civic participation that strengthens
22 democracy, and the proposed abolishment of North Sydney
23 diminishes this. My whole adult life has revolved around
24 the Lower North Shore and Northern Beaches. I have been
25 active in the community, trying to improve the lives of
26 residents and rate payers. The loss of Forestville and
27 Killarney Heights from Warringah would certainly sadden my
28 family and my brother's family. In total, my families have
29 spent close to 70 years in 2087, which is the post code for
30 Forestville and Killarney.
31

32 I've also witnessed rapid changes in Dee Why as a
33 delivery manager in those days, from the early days of
34 being contacted by my local member, who was Tony Abbott at
35 the time, working with him to improve services provided by
36 Australia Post, working with the Royal Blind Society and
37 Guide Dogs Association to find appropriate employment for
38 the vision impaired back in the late '90s, my affiliation
39 to Warringah and North Sydney have been both for family and
40 career. Now in my retirement, I believe I have the
41 experience to see the different perspective. What others
42 may see as logical and straightforward, I see as expedient
43 and possibly unethical.
44

45 The very hard-won seats of North Sydney and Warringah
46 are now in danger of being reduced by a full half because
47 of this proposal. To me, a long term resident that has

1 made Warringah his home, this proposed redistribution does
2 not sit well. I respectfully urge the redistribution
3 committee to reconsider this proposal, which will result in
4 the loss of either North Sydney or Warringah electorates.
5 Thank you very much.

6
7 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is
8 Ann-Charlott Paduch.

9
10 <ANN-CHARLOTT PADUCH:

11
12 MS PADUCH: Hello, thank you for the opportunity to speak
13 today. My name is Ann-Charlott Paduch. I have been living
14 in the Division of Warringah for 15 years, since 2009 when
15 I moved to Balgowlah Heights with my husband and my two
16 daughters. For the past three years, I have worked as the
17 community engagement officer in Zali Steggall's electorate,
18 and I would like to support Zali Steggall's objection
19 number 671. I fully support her argument to keep the
20 current communities in Warringah together and grow our
21 division by adding North Dee Why in the north, and the
22 remainder of Neutral Bay and Cremorne, as well as all of
23 Kirribilli and Cammeray in the west. This is outlined in
24 her plan A. I particularly object to the removal of two
25 areas that are very much part of Warringah, one being North
26 Curl Curl and part of Dee Why, and the second being
27 Forestville, Killarney Heights and Frenchs Forest south of
28 Warringah Road, as we have just heard from Michael Fong.

29
30 In my role as a community engagement officer, I have
31 been contacted by numerous constituents who reside in those
32 two areas since the AEC has made their draft proposal
33 public. The constituents are devastated that their areas
34 are being removed from Warringah and they are no longer
35 part of our electorate. Many Warringah constituents have
36 made objections or comments on objections, but not all feel
37 they have the skills or the time to make an objection, or
38 can appear today at the public inquiry at short notice,
39 midweek. They have asked me to voice their concerns and
40 their deep desire to stay in Warringah. They feel very
41 strong personal ties to the electorate of Warringah, and
42 these ties are often two-fold.

43
44 Firstly, they and their families spend the majority of
45 their time in the broader Warringah electorate. For
46 shopping, leisure, schooling, for almost any activity, they
47 look south to Brookvale, Manly and the southern beaches

1 instead of the upper Northern Beaches which comprise
2 Mackellar. As one example of arbitrary change, the
3 community of Curl Curl would be split in half with their
4 beach as well as their schools and businesses divided into
5 two electorates.

6
7 Secondly, the residents of those two areas also feel
8 very connected to the grass roots movement that has grown
9 in Warringah since 2018 and has transformed Warringah into
10 a community independent seat where the MP represents her
11 constituents first and foremost rather than party
12 interests. The strong community bond has enriched the
13 lives of many of us and created a strong sense of
14 belonging. For the first time, many people actually care
15 which electorate they live in.

16
17 A new community of interest has been created. It has
18 led to new friendships and community groups in areas
19 ranging from climate action to refugee support and First
20 Nations allyship. All these activities and relationships
21 lead to better mental health, help improve the fabric of
22 our society, and foster a renewed engagement with
23 democracy. Strong engagement with our democracy is
24 especially important in these uncertain times, with
25 formerly strong Western democracies under threat overseas.
26 We need to support activated citizens and keep seats such
27 as Warringah and North Sydney with their strong sense of
28 community.

29
30 In conclusion, I urge you to keep the areas of
31 Forestville, Killarney, Frenchs Forest as well as North
32 Curl Curl and Dee Why and Warringah in the current
33 electorate. And I urge you to keep both seats Warringah as
34 well as North Sydney with their vibrant community of active
35 citizens. I thank the Electoral Commission for your time
36 and for hearing me today along with so many others. Thank
37 you.

38
39 CHAIR: Can I thank you and also apologise for
40 mispronouncing your surname.

41
42 MS PADUCH: No, it is very tricky. You did a good job.
43 Thank you.

44
45 CHAIR: The next speaker is Steven Kunz.

46
47 <STEVEN KUNZ:

1
2 MR KUNZ: Madam chairman, you've got two German names in a
3 row. Sorry about that. Thank you for allowing me the
4 opportunity to address the Committee today. My name is
5 Steven Kunz and I have been a resident of Warringah for
6 some 47 years. I've not previously made a suggestion,
7 objected or commented in the redistribution process. We're
8 all aware that both Warringah and Mackellar need additional
9 voters to be within the 2023 and projected 2028 thresholds.
10 Today, I want to address the specific areas of St Ives,
11 St Ives Chase, and Killarney Heights, Forestville, Frenchs
12 Forest, Dee Why and Curl Curl as they directly relate to
13 the divisions of Warringah and Mackellar.

14
15 The decision whether these suburbs are allocated to
16 Mackellar or Warringah is more than about these two
17 divisions. The loss of Killarney Heights, Forestville,
18 Frenchs Forest, Dee Why and Curl Curl from Warringah to
19 Mackellar means that for Warringah to obtain the quota, it
20 has to take those numbers of electors lost in those suburbs
21 and then more from North Sydney. That pushes Warringah
22 into the suburbs of Wollstonecraft and Waverton, far from
23 the electorate's hubs of Mosman and Manly. When the
24 remainder of North Sydney is split between Bennelong and
25 Bradfield, that results in the abolition of North Sydney.

26
27 Viewed objectively, the connection of Killarney
28 Heights, Forestville, Frenchs Forest, Dee Why and Curl Curl
29 to Warringah is much stronger than their connection to
30 Mackellar. In terms of travel, education, retail and
31 employment, the focus of these suburbs is towards the
32 south. The distances between each of these suburbs and
33 Manly and the shopping centre of Warringah Mall is less
34 than the distance from centres in Mackellar with similar
35 amenity, such as Mona Vale and Warriewood. Simply put,
36 these areas are proximate to major centres in Warringah and
37 share a strong community of interest with the division.

38
39 Turning now to the proposed addition of St Ives and
40 St Ives Chase to Mackellar, I would contend that the
41 arguments used to object to the addition of these suburbs
42 to Mackellar, specifically the comments on objections
43 number 186, are mainly related to the remoteness from the
44 division and are overstated. Mackellar has, by virtue of
45 its geography, a number of areas of population at some
46 distance from its main centres in Mona Vale and Warriewood.
47 Take Scotland Island and Cottage Point, for instance. The

1 former is separated by water from the rest of the
2 electorate and the latter by the Ku-ring-gai National Park
3 and having no public transport connection whatever. So
4 separation by topography is not an anomaly in Mackellar;
5 it's actually a feature of that division.
6

7 In comparison, St Ives is connected to Mona Vale by a
8 road with public transport and is similar in distance and
9 time from Mona Vale as are Duffys Forest, Davidson and
10 Belrose, that are existing suburbs in that division. In
11 fact, according to Google Maps, both the travel time to and
12 distance from St Ives to Mona Vale is actually less than
13 that of Davidson to Mona Vale, and Davidson is part of the
14 Mackellar electorate. So can it be seriously suggested
15 then that the voters of St Ives and St Ives Chase are so
16 different from the voters in those suburbs in terms of
17 housing, education and general concerns, that they could
18 not effectively be represented if they were added to the
19 Division of Mackellar?
20

21 Finally, the proposition has been advanced that
22 Mackellar, although not occupying the whole of the Northern
23 Beaches LGA, would benefit from being wholly within the
24 boundaries of it. However, Federal issues tend not to be
25 restricted to a single Local Government Area, and there is
26 a level of government between Federal and local, being the
27 State Government. So, one wonders whether this alleged
28 benefit is somewhat illusory.
29

30 In conclusion, I don't believe there are any
31 particular valid reasons to excise the suburbs of Killarney
32 Heights, Forestville, Frenchs Forest, Dee Why and Curl Curl
33 from Warringah. Moreover, there is a reasonable argument
34 for adding St Ives and St Ives Chase to Mackellar, and
35 I would urge the Committee to consider that option. The
36 decision faced by the Committee in respect of these areas
37 is simple. But, as I said earlier, it is about more than
38 Mackellar and Warringah. The stark choice is to excise
39 areas of Warringah which share a strong community of
40 interest with the division, with the almost inevitable
41 consequence being the abolition of North Sydney, or keep
42 those areas in Warringah while adding North Dee Why and
43 extending the division's western boundary to the Warringah
44 Freeway, and add St Ives and St Ives Chase to Mackellar for
45 it to reach its quota. Then North Sydney can, by expanding
46 north, remain a Federal division.
47

1 I thank the Committee for their time today and wish
2 them well in their deliberations.

3
4 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is
5 Penny Scardifield.

6
7 <PENNY SCARDIFIELD:

8
9 MS SCARDIFIELD: Good afternoon, and thank you for the
10 opportunity to speak today. My name is Penny Scardifield,
11 and I object to the proposed abolition of the Division of
12 North Sydney. My strong connection and experience with the
13 community of North Sydney has made me front up today. I am
14 the third generation of my family to have lived in the
15 electorate, in the suburbs of Lane Cove, Chatswood, Neutral
16 Bay, Waverton, and for the last 11 years Kirribilli. I
17 attended Lane Cove Public School and North Sydney Girls
18 High. My three adult children were educated at North
19 Sydney Dem, Monte Sant' Angelo and Shore. I have been on
20 the North Sydney electoral roll since I was 18 years of age
21 and I have voted in every election since. I am also a
22 homeowner and a rate payer for the last 25 years. I have
23 retired after running a successful professional services
24 business in the electorate, employing several staff for
25 many years in commercial tenancies both in St Leonards and
26 in Crows Nest.

27
28 In 1995, I was elected to North Sydney Council as a
29 community independent, was re-elected for a second term and
30 retired after eight and a half years, including seven years
31 as deputy mayor. During that time, I held board positions
32 on numerous council committees and organisations in the
33 community, including James Milson Retirement Village, the
34 Nut Coat Trust and Museum, North Sydney Leisure Centre,
35 Crows Nest Community Centre, North Sydney Family Day Care,
36 Crows Nest Indoor Sports Centre, and also represented North
37 Sydney on the Regional Organisation of Councils.

38
39 I do appreciate that the AEC have a very difficult
40 task in ensuring that all Australian electorates contain a
41 similar number of voters, and the boundary redistributions
42 is an integral and ongoing part of this process. However,
43 I believe your decision to abolish North Sydney, retire the
44 name and spread the voters across three neighbouring
45 electorates who have little in common with our community of
46 interest is based on inaccurate projections.

1 Your report on page 20 shows the projected 2028 voter
2 enrolment for North Sydney as 112,566. I'm at a loss, not
3 being a statistician or an economist, to understand how
4 that is possible, given that the latest quarterly figures
5 that are published on your website show that as at June 30,
6 2024, North Sydney had 113,679 enrolled voters. And that's
7 just six weeks ago. So we're already above your 2028
8 target.

9
10 Furthermore, it seems that your projected growth rate
11 somehow has ignored the huge potential growth that is in
12 North Sydney. I see this every day when I am out and about
13 in the community, with developments already under
14 construction, updated planning policies within all the
15 different LGAs, and not to mention the State government's
16 proposed further upscaling of densities in the suburbs
17 around the new metro and heavy rail corridors. The New
18 South Wales Department of Planning have already identified
19 Crows Nest and St Leonards as strategic and priority
20 population growth nodes, with some 24,000 new homes
21 expected in the electorate across multiple LGAs.

22
23 The AEC proposal also appears to not give appropriate
24 recognition to the strong economic community of interest
25 that includes the North Sydney CBD, the third-largest in
26 New South Wales, plus the over 25,000 small businesses in
27 that electorate. The proposal to split the St Leonards and
28 Crows Nest CBD into three divisions of Warringah, which is
29 centred in Manly; Bennelong, centred in Epping; and
30 Bradfield, centred in Lindfield; is suboptimal.

31
32 Our communities deserve to be represented by one
33 Federal MP. I support Mr McLelland, who spoke earlier, and
34 Ms Stoneman, who also spoke, about retaining the seat of
35 North Sydney, and I urge you to reconsider. I think your
36 proposal is based on somehow some flawed projections, and
37 the original Federation seat that has existed for 123 years
38 is the core of our community's identity and it's a source
39 of enormous pride. We punch well above our weight, so
40 please, North Sydney needs to be retained. Thank you for
41 your time today.

42
43 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is
44 Mr Rory Amon, state MP for Pittwater.

45
46 <RORY AMON:
47

1 MR AMON: Thank you for allowing me to address this
2 hearing today. I am Rory Amon, State Member for Pittwater,
3 and I seek to address you regarding to two questions: one,
4 whether the suburbs or Frenchs Forest, Killarney Heights,
5 North Curl Curl and Dee Why, being Mackellar, and two,
6 should the suburbs of St Ives and St Ives Chase be included
7 in Mackellar. I propose to address each question by
8 reference to the criteria in section 93 of the Act.

9
10 Question one: in terms of communities of interest, as
11 I have mentioned, the suburbs of the Killarney Heights,
12 Forestville, Frenchs Forest, Belrose, Davidson, Terrey Hills
13 and Duffys Forest comprise an area well-known as "The
14 Forest". They share common features of no direct surf
15 beach; no direct surf club community; low density housing;
16 quarter acre blocks; the same council area, Northern
17 Beaches Council; and the area adjoins Ku-ring-gai and
18 Garigal national parks. Each suburb has a rural fire
19 brigade. Unifying The Forest into Mackellar means all 17
20 RFS brigades in the Northern Beaches area and their
21 catchment will be represented by one member of Parliament.
22 Currently, the Davidson brigade is split between Mackellar
23 and Warringah as it includes Forestville and Killarney
24 Heights, and I am a 10-year member and past president of
25 that brigade.

26
27 In terms of travel, The Forest are shares the same bus
28 operator, being Forest Coach Lines in region 14, and there
29 is no train service in that area.

30
31 In terms of physical features, I've referred to the
32 bushland nature of the forest. Having the entirety of the
33 forest in Mackellar utilises the boundaries of the national
34 parks, noting Garigal encompasses the entirety of Killarney
35 Heights as well as Middle Harbour Creek. The Roseville
36 Bridge also serves as a geographic boundary for Mackellar.
37 As at 2028, The Forest area will have 30,000 residents:
38 23,000 currently in Mackellar, 7,000 in Warringah. Given
39 the community interest shared by The Forest area suburbs,
40 given the opportunity, it makes eminent sense to unify them
41 into one Federal electorate.

42
43 Regarding Dee Why North Curl Curl, in terms of
44 communities of interest, assuming 7,000 identified
45 residents from The Forest come into Mackellar, another
46 7,500 residents need to be identified. This can easily be
47 done by unifying the suburbs of Dee Why into Mackellar and

1 moving North Curl Curl in there as well. The current
2 border of Pacific Parade, splitting Dee Why in half makes
3 absolutely no sense and confuses the community. The
4 proposed boundaries, anyone who lives in Dee Why and Curl
5 Curl can clearly be told and understand they are in
6 Mackellar.
7

8 In addition, the proposal will bring another surf club
9 community into Mackellar, being North Curl Curl Surf Club,
10 taking the total of surf club communities in Mackellar from
11 15 to 16, leaving five in Warringah. The entirety of the
12 Mackellar will also continue to remain in the Northern
13 Beaches LGA. In terms of physical features of the area of
14 the proposed redistribution regarding Dee Why and North
15 Curl Curl, the electoral boundary becomes Curl Curl lagoon
16 and the North Curl Curl netball courts. Anyone who has
17 ever lived in or been to the Northern Beaches will know
18 that this area is descended upon by thousands of young
19 girls, and boys at times as well, for netball every
20 Saturday, and it is a well-loved area and well-known and
21 identified geographic divide and feature.
22

23 In terms of means of travel, the suburbs of Dee Why
24 and Curl Curl are both served by the same bus company,
25 Keolis Downer, in region 8, and all the residents know and
26 love the B-Line service. For these reasons, it makes
27 eminent sense to unify Forest into Mackellar, unify Dee Why
28 and include all of North Curl Curl as well.
29

30 Question two, regarding St Ives and St Ives Chase in
31 Mackellar. Those suburbs are under a separate council,
32 Ku-ring-gai Council, including nine other elected councils.
33 It makes no sense to bring them into Mackellar at all.
34 Residents in those suburbs are not regarded as being in the
35 Northern Beaches or The Forest; they are regarded as North
36 Shore. These suburbs include much high density, with
37 St Ives have 1,600 apartments. At 2021, this included 25
38 per cent of the total dwellings in St Ives. To compare
39 this to The Forest area, the Davidson suburb had eight
40 apartments of 886 dwellings in 2021, being 1 per cent, and
41 Belrose had 320 apartments of 3,090 dwellings as at 2021.
42 Forestville had 187 apartments of 3,045, and I am okay to
43 pass these details on if you like.
44

45 According to the 2021 census, the Bradfield
46 electorate, home to St Ives and St Ives Chase, has a strong
47 Jewish community of nearly 3,200 individuals. St Ives and

1 St Ives Chase have 1,600 of that community. Moving these
2 suburbs to a different Federal electorate makes no sense
3 and unnecessarily splits that strong community between two
4 electorates. There are no surf club communities and
5 negligible RFS communities in that area.
6

7 In terms of physical features, there is a clear divide
8 between the Mackellar and the St Ives suburbs, being the
9 section of Mona Vale Road from Belrose to St Ives. This is
10 4 kilometre stretch of road through bushland. The nearest
11 residents in St Ives to the nearest dwelling in Mackellar
12 is even farther away than that.
13

14 Regarding travel, these suburbs rely heavily on the
15 North Shore rail line, primarily stations from Lindfield to
16 Hornsby. This is not a feature of the current Mackellar
17 electorate in any way. There is no rational basis to
18 include these suburbs in Mackellar in circumstances where
19 far better options exist, including The Forest, Dee Why and
20 North Curl Curl. I do note the proposal does include to
21 retain 18 residents from Warringah in Warringah, so that
22 might be something the Commissioner looks at as well.
23

24 CHAIR: Thank you very much. Is there some material which
25 may assist?
26

27 MR AMON: I am happy to hand over my original with my
28 handwritten notes, but it's all - it'll probably assist to
29 have it.
30

31 CHAIR: Thank you very much. The next speaker is Julian
32 Leeson, MP, Member for Berowra.
33

34 <JULIAN LEESER:
35

36 MR LEESER: Thank you Madam Chair and members of the
37 Committee. I am here today to defend the work of the
38 Committee and the proposed redistribution. I could have
39 come here and argued for changes to make Berowra a safer
40 electorate than you have drawn it to be, I could have
41 started a campaign locally to encourage constituents to
42 write in to achieve a more favourable political outcome for
43 me, I could have argued the Liberal party's original
44 submission. But I haven't, because I acknowledge the
45 difficult task the committee's had and I support your
46 unanimous recommendation.
47

1 I want to talk to you about three things today:
2 Firstly, how the Berowra electorate you have drawn in the
3 proposed redistribution meets the statutory obligations and
4 aims of the redistribution and should not be altered.
5 Second, I want to rebut the opportunistic campaign from the
6 Teals that would see the Berowra electorate instead of
7 North Sydney being abolished. And, Chair, I understand the
8 campaign. If I had been the member of Parliament whose
9 electorate had been abolished, I would have made
10 submissions, I would have organised my community and
11 supporters to make submissions, I would have done petitions
12 and I would have had people from my community here to lobby
13 you. You and your committee will have been this sort of
14 thing any time that you have proposed to abolish a seat
15 anywhere in the country.
16

17 But nothing that I have heard today and nothing that I
18 have read in submissions would suggest that you should
19 depart from your recommendation. Finally, I want to rebut
20 the suggestions made by the Labor party and the campaign
21 run by the Federal member of Bennelong that Epping and
22 North Epping should not be part of the Berowra electorate.
23

24 So far as Berowra's concerned, there's an elegance to
25 what your committee has done. The new Berowra boundaries
26 well meet the Committee's statutory obligations. It meets
27 the numerical criteria, it has provided for a Berowra which
28 is above quota and is projected to remain above quota.
29 It's united the Hornsby Shire in one electorate, rather
30 than the three it's currently in. It's simplified the
31 complementary areas of the Hills Shire in the electorate,
32 limiting Berowra to only areas within the largely
33 peri-urban north ward, rather than the north and east
34 wards. It's added the community of Epping, with its very
35 recent historical links to the Hornsby Shire, its shared
36 school catchments, railway junctions and its shopping
37 precinct, used by shoppers particularly from Beecroft and
38 Cheltenham.
39

40 The proposal maintains the railway networks on the T1
41 line between the Hornsby railway junction the city limits
42 at Hawkesbury River station, and the T9 railway lines
43 between the junctions of Hornsby and Epping, and it
44 contains the Sydney Metro stations of Cherrybrook and
45 Epping.
46

47 The proposal has used the Hawkesbury River as a

1 boundary and maintained the southern boundary of the
2 Hawkesbury to Cattai to within one Federal electorate,
3 reducing further confusion for river communities. It also
4 complies with the commission's policy not to cross the
5 Hawkesbury River. It has used other waterways like Cowan
6 Creek, Cattai Creek and Terrys Creek as natural boundaries.
7 It has followed the Hills Council boundary on Boundary Road
8 at Maraylya. It's used the major road, Midson Road, as a
9 boundary separating Epping from West Epping. It's used
10 main roads like Pennant Hills Road and Castle Hill Road as
11 boundaries following local government boundary lines.
12

13 The redistribution has reunited the suburbs of
14 Hornsby, Asquith and Normanhurst, which were previously
15 split between Bradfield and Berowra. In short, the
16 committee's proposed boundaries are simple, strong and
17 easily recognisable.
18

19 Secondly, I'd like to acknowledge the Committee has
20 had a difficult task in nominating an electorate for
21 abolition. I note that the Committee didn't consider
22 abolishing the Berowra electorate, even though several
23 submissions suggested it. I also note that the Committee's
24 decision to abolish North Sydney was unanimous. The
25 suggestion from the Teals is that Berowra should be
26 abolished and that the Hornsby Shire should be split
27 between three electorates of Mitchell, Bradfield and
28 Bennelong.
29

30 Splitting the Hornsby Shire undermines one of the
31 Committee's objectives in uniting Local Government Area
32 boundaries. It also fails to understand the close
33 connection between the peri-urban areas of the Hornsby
34 Shire and suburban area, particularly the Hornsby CBD.
35

36 The Berowra electorate has always had a mix of
37 peri-urban and suburban areas. It is what gives the
38 electorate its character. Many people living in the
39 peri-urban areas drive to Hornsby, particular from Galston,
40 Arcadia and Dural, to park their cars and then take the
41 train to the city and elsewhere for work. For most people
42 across the Hornsby Shire, their major shopping centre is
43 the Hornsby CBD. In addition, the popular 638 bus links
44 people in the peri-urban areas with Pennant Hills station
45 and a shopping link to the business precincts.
46

47 There has never, ever been any political division

1 between Berowra's peri-urban and suburban areas. For
2 instance, A ward of Hornsby Council provides both the
3 peri-urban areas of The Shire and the suburban areas from
4 Asquith to the Hawkesbury River as well as Hornsby heights.
5 Despite the Teals' argument to the contrary, there is no
6 community of interest between the Bradfield and Berowra
7 electorates. Our major councils, Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai,
8 are very different. People in the Hornsby Shire do not
9 regard themselves as being part of the North Shore. They
10 identify with the Hornsby Shire as a distinct community,
11 while being part of broader northern Sydney. In fact,
12 Ku-ring-gai Council fought the New South Wales Government's
13 attempts to amalgamate Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai shires a few
14 years ago in part because the communities were so
15 different.

16
17 Finally, let me deal with the suggestion about
18 transferring North Epping and Epping back to Bennelong.
19 North Epping is part of the Hornsby Shire and should be
20 retained in one electorate. It's not possible to access
21 North Epping without driving through Epping, which until
22 recently was part of the Hornsby Shire. Connections
23 between Epping and the broader Berowra community are
24 demonstrated by Epping Station being a major junction for
25 the T9 railway line from Hornsby, and the metro from
26 Cherrybrook. In addition, school catchments areas at
27 Epping Boys, Cheltenham Girls, Carlingford High and Epping
28 Heights Public School include Epping and other existing
29 areas within the Berowra electorate.

30
31 For these reasons, the Committee should maintain its
32 original proposal. Thank you.

33
34 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is
35 Sally Paton. Is Sally Paton here?

36
37 MR ROGERS: Sally Paton?

38
39 <SALLY PATON:

40
41 MS PATON: Hello, I'm Sally Peyton, and I'm an architect
42 who has worked in North Sydney and in McMahon's Point.
43 I've been a resident in Greenwich for 30 years. And I'd
44 like to - not very articulate, being an architect, but I'd
45 like to actually present more of the issues of planning.
46 So, democracy is deciding how we live, and that is
47 determined by planning and development issues, and what I

1 do know as an architect is that fragmentation leads to very
2 poor planning and very poor allocation of public money.

3
4 I'd like to point out that St Leonards and Crows Nest
5 is a very newly emerging CBD. Now, the problem that is has
6 is that it's already fragmented by Local Government Area,
7 so that's the Lane Cove Council, the North Sydney Council
8 and Willoughby Council. It's also fragmented by state
9 boundaries, and the Federal electorate has really been its
10 only unifying force. If we keep North Sydney intact, we
11 actually have a fighting chance to make this newly emerging
12 area a great place to live. We want to make efficient,
13 sensible, coordinated decisions about spending public
14 money, and there is a lot of public money going into this
15 area, huge infrastructures being already implemented, a lot
16 of government planning about residences, and that
17 determines how we live.

18
19 And what I know is if you live on the periphery, your
20 needs are ignored. So this is - and we're living in a new
21 experiment in Sydney of high density living. So I think
22 that the - and I'm asking for these people in this new area
23 to have a say in how their lives are going to be, how their
24 public land is going to be used, how their transport is
25 going to be used, how their population density is going to
26 be apparent. So I would like to see North Sydney kept as
27 an entity in term to safeguard, you know, our future
28 population. I think a lot of the other issues have been
29 addressed by other people very nicely. Thank you for your
30 time.

31
32 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next person is
33 Kirsty Gold and after that Tina Jackson.

34
35 <KIRSTY GOLD:

36
37 MS GOLD: Hello. My name is Kirsty Gold. I would like to
38 thank the Committee for the opportunity to speak to you
39 today, and I'd like to pay my respects to the Gadigal
40 People, the traditional custodians of the people we are
41 meeting on today, and pay my respects to Elders past and
42 present.

43
44 I have lived in Mosman in the electorate of Warringah
45 for over 21 years and my children have grown up here and
46 attended schools in Warringah and both North Sydney.
47 I would like to speak to you on three things today. In

1 support of the committee's proposal to retain the seat of
2 Warringah, in objection to the proposal to remove
3 Forestville, Killarney Heights, Frenchs Forest, North Curl
4 Curl and Dee Why out of Warringah, and in objection to the
5 abolishment of the Division of North Sydney and in support
6 of the Member for North Sydney's submission and proposal in
7 submission 686 to combine Bradfield and Berowra.

8
9 I note that the Committee considers communities of
10 interest in its deliberations. I ask the Committee to
11 consider that there has been new social communities of
12 interests created since the last Federal redistribution. I
13 have been part of this new place space community of
14 interest that has been consciously created in Warringah by
15 citizens who have been concerned about the quality of our
16 representation. I am originally very proudly from regional
17 Australia, but I can say that I've never felt such a strong
18 sense of community than I do now. I haven't been
19 interested or engaged in democracy before this, like many
20 people here today, but the civic participation in democracy
21 that now exists in the communities of Warringah and North
22 Sydney strengthens our democratic system and breaking up
23 these communities would be a huge loss. Preserving engaged
24 electoral communities is crucial for maintaining the
25 strength and integrity of our democratic system.

26
27 I'd like to convey to the Committee that there is a
28 real sense of sadness and loss from the communities in
29 Forestville, Killarney Heights, Frenchs Forest, North Curl
30 Curl and Dee Why of being moved out of Warringah. I was
31 speaking to a dear friend from Killarney Heights last
32 night, who I've met through this civic revival
33 participation. He was unable to take a day off from his
34 job today to attend because of the short notice, and has
35 asked me to pass on his concerns to you today. As I said,
36 there are many others like him that can't be here today.
37 He is incredibly sad and asked the Committee to please
38 consider the objections received from people to remove
39 Forestville, Killarney Heights and Frenchs Forest from
40 Warringah, as they tend to move south and, as said by
41 others here today, focus on services in Warringah like
42 Warringah Mall.

43
44 I also request that the community of St Ives not be
45 given priority over those of Waverton and Wollstonecraft,
46 who would have no economic, social or transport connection
47 with much of Warringah, were they to become part of our

1 electorate. And I note just how far geographically they
2 are from most parts of Warringah.

3
4 In my experience, many people do not normally care or
5 know which Federal electorate they are in. To be honest,
6 most people living in Warringah or North Sydney, they not
7 only know but are proud to live in these communities. The
8 unprecedented number of submissions put forward by the
9 community - and I beg to differ from the Member for
10 Berowra, with respect, that it was not done by the Teals,
11 but as was directly represented to you today by the
12 community, it's by the communities of residents of North
13 Sydney and others like myself and Warringah. And
14 particularly the unprecedented number of submissions put
15 forward by the community of North Sydney, including the
16 thousands that signed a petition and the heart-felt emotion
17 we've all seen here today, shows there is a very strong new
18 community of interest in the North Sydney electorate.

19
20 With reference to that, I ask the Committee to
21 consider the precedent of the proposed abolition of the
22 Federal seat of Murray, now Nicholls, in Victoria in 2010,
23 which was overturned because of a community of interest in
24 that electorate. Given the government's significant
25 residential, business and metro plans in the North Sydney
26 CBD, St Leonards and Crows Nest areas, splitting this area
27 up amongst three Federal electorates will make the
28 management of this growth corridor very difficult.

29
30 Further, the commercial nature of these areas starkly
31 differs from the residential nature of Warringah. I think
32 the alternative redistribution proposal in submission 686
33 by the Member for North Sydney has strong merit. It
34 provides an alternative outcome that achieves the goals of
35 the New South Wales seat redistribution but retains
36 communities of interest. Berowra and Bradfield are both
37 residential areas of the Upper North Shore. This is very
38 distinct from the Lower North Shore. In summary, I am
39 supportive of retaining Warringah and North Sydney, and
40 combining Bradfield and Berowra. Thank you again for your
41 time and consideration today.

42
43 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. Tina Jackson.

44
45 <TINA JACKSON:

46
47 MS JACKSON: Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you

1 today. My name is Tina Jackson, and I'll be speaking about
2 North Sydney and Warringah. I grew up in Wollstonecraft in
3 North Sydney and worked in the Sydney CBD, and I then moved
4 to Mosman, in Warringah, where I've lived for nearly 40
5 years. And I am here today because I am passionate about a
6 well-functioning democracy and the extraordinary grassroots
7 civic participation that I have been a part of since 2018,
8 resulting in the election of two outstanding female
9 community independent MPs in Warringah and North Sydney.

10
11 So in summary, one, I strongly urge that the
12 electorate of North Sydney be retained and support Kylea
13 Tink's proposal to extend North Sydney's boundaries further
14 north to reunite the Chatswood CBD into a single division
15 with North Sydney, Artarmon and Crows Nest and St Leonards.
16 Rather than abolish North Sydney, a superior option is the
17 combination of Bradfield and Berowra.

18
19 And two, I equally strongly support the retention of
20 Warringah and its name, including the retention of its
21 beachside suburbs of North Curl Curl in Dee Why, along with
22 Frenchs Forest, Killarney Heights and Forestville.
23 Instead, I commend the proposal by Zali Steggall to expand
24 Warringah to include Kirribilli, the areas of Neutral Bay
25 not currently part of Warringah, North Cremorne and
26 Cammeray.

27
28 And thirdly, in making this submission, I ask the
29 Committee to consider an important new community of
30 interest, an electorate place-based community of interest
31 of citizens actively engaged in our democracy. And just
32 expanding a bit on those three points. In the lead-up to
33 the 2022 election, I worked closely with the North Sydney
34 community as part of Zali Steggall's Climate Act Now
35 campaign and helped community groups who formed to elect a
36 community independent.

37
38 I witnessed first-hand how the community came together
39 to elect Kylea Tink. Thousands of volunteers stepping up
40 to be the change they wanted to see. And I have seen
41 since how the community has worked together to create their
42 own unique community of interest, a community of interest
43 that exists within the current boundaries of North Sydney
44 and that will tragically disappear along with the division.
45 The proposed abolition of North Sydney fractures a cohesive
46 and democratically engaged community.

1 This is a new community of interest that I ask the
2 Commission to consider. New to the Australian political
3 landscape, new to previous AEC deliberations, and quite
4 unprecedented in my lifetime. It is a community of
5 interested citizens actively engaged in our democracy and
6 passionate about civic participation, and it's worth
7 underlining that this new community of interest is
8 electorate-based. It is place-based. And many people
9 don't even know what electorate they live in, but the
10 people of North Sydney certainly do. And they care deeply
11 that they are part of the North Sydney electorate and are
12 genuinely devastated at the thought of losing it.

13
14 Kylea Tink has outlined in detail the reasons why the
15 merging of Bradfield and Berowra is a superior alternative,
16 including retaining and strengthening a strong economic,
17 civic and social communities of interest, and requiring
18 fewer consequential boundary adjustments. I commend this
19 less destructive and divisive solution to you and I ask the
20 Committee to prioritise the new electorate community of
21 interest and look to extending North Sydney's boundaries
22 further to the North to reunite the Chatswood CBD into a
23 single division with North Sydney, Artarmon and Crows Nest
24 St Leonards.

25
26 Turning to Warringah, its beachside suburbs could not
27 be further removed from the bustling North Sydney CBD,
28 Sydney's third-largest CBD, and the Crows Nest St Leonards
29 business corridor. Warringah is a beachside electorate,
30 and its beach suburbs of Dee Why and North Curl Curl should
31 be retained. All of Dee Why and all of Curl Curl should be
32 kept together in Warringah, along with Frenchs Forest,
33 Killarney Heights and Forestville.

34
35 The new community of interest we see in North Sydney
36 was inspired by Warringah, who led the way in electing a
37 community MP who genuinely represents our values and
38 interests. In terms of the more traditional community of
39 interest and connection, the North Sydney CBD and centres
40 like St Leonards and Crows Nest sit very uneasily in
41 Warringah. Manly to Wollstonecraft-Waverton is a very long
42 stretch, not only geographically but culturally and in
43 terms of community of interest, and a superior alternative
44 would be to retain what is currently Warringah and expand
45 it to include Neutral Bay, Kirribilli, North Cremorne and
46 Cammeray.

47

1 And finally, the democratic participation to elect a
2 community independent in Warringah in 2019 and in 2022, and
3 in North Sydney in 2022 is nothing short of extraordinary.
4 The level of political activation and resulting community
5 connection and cohesion cannot be overstated. For the
6 first time, people really feel part of their electorate
7 community. These electorates are so much more than mere
8 boundaries. They encompass diverse communities of all
9 ages, united by common values, who came together to elect
10 strong, female community independents.

11
12 And I, too, urge the Committee to look to the
13 precedent of the Victorian Federal seat of Murray, renamed
14 Nicholls in 2018, whose abolition was proposed as part of
15 the 2010 AEC redistribution.

16
17 CHAIR: I'm really sorry to interrupt you, but you are now
18 into your sixth minute.

19
20 MS JACKSON: Sorry, let me conclude. I do appreciate the
21 difficulty of the task before the Committee, but I feel not
22 enough weight has been put on the new community of interest
23 in the North Sydney region. And I ask that you retain
24 North Sydney, and also just to take note of the enormity of
25 what has been achieved in Warringah and North Sydney, the
26 extent of the social cohesion and at a time when democracy
27 around the world is under threat, we have in our small part
28 of the world communities that really care about democracy,
29 and I implore you not to demolish that. Thank you. I'm
30 sorry for going over time.

31
32 CHAIR: Thanks very much. The next person is Glenda
33 Hewitt.

34
35 <GLENDA HEWITT:

36
37 MS HEWITT: Can I just say I admire the stamina of the
38 group here for sitting through so many submissions. Thank
39 you all for staying awake. My name is Glenda Hewitt and I
40 am a representative of Artarmon and a member of the North
41 Sydney electorate. In this era of world political
42 uncertainty, one of the national treasures we have in
43 Australia is the Australian Electoral Commission, an
44 independent body that oversees our electoral process when
45 we look at what's happening in the world and how precious
46 that is. So I don't envy you the decisions you have to
47 make and the things you have to do, but - and the trust of

1 the Australian population is in your hands on this matter.

2
3 I'd also like to refute a statement I heard earlier.
4 There is no such thing as a "Teal". There is a number of
5 independent candidates who the media, for all their
6 confection, have lumped together as a Teal, but they are
7 independents. I did not collude with anybody, neither was
8 I coerced into putting forward a submission. I did it
9 because I felt so passionate about it, and I did it because
10 for the first time at the last election I had a choice of
11 being involved in the electoral process and have a clear
12 choice. Not just a Liberal or a Labor person, I had a
13 choice about a Liberal, a Labor or an independent and who
14 was going to represent me properly.

15
16 I have never voted along party lines, I voted along
17 the lines of people who are going to serve the community
18 the best. And at the last election, it was clear to me
19 that the person who was listening to the community and
20 engaging with the community was our subsequently elected
21 independent member. And to me, that people came out in
22 force and obviously felt the same way, said there in
23 itself, despite the geographical and the transport and the
24 social things that bind us, there is in itself a community
25 of interest who has taken an interest in the whole
26 electoral process and engaged. To dismantle that, to my
27 mind, so short-sighted and not in the interest of Australia
28 and independence.

29
30 I also envy people who managed to write notes on their
31 phones, because my handwriting is so disgusting, I'm having
32 trouble reading my notes.

33
34 When this whole process started and the proposed
35 redistribution came up, I went back to the parliamentary
36 library, did a search and said, "What triggers a
37 redistribution? What makes it happen that we have to look
38 at changing the way things are?" And I thought, "Okay,
39 it's where representation entitlement of the state changes,
40 okay, where the divisions of the state are malapportioned,
41 or where redistribution has not been held for seven years.

42
43 Now, I think change is good. I think we should never
44 become so complacent that we don't consider change. That's
45 part of democracy. That's about getting things better in
46 the future. So, okay, representation. So the numbers.
47 Then I went back to your numbers on the AEC website, and i

1 looked at them and thought, "Wait a minute. The population
2 numbers are actually growing." I see it. I am looking at
3 the high density developments that are proposed for the
4 area that I live in. In the short term, our numbers are
5 growing slowly. In the next two or three years, our
6 numbers going to increase exponentially. So it makes no
7 sense to make a short-term decision based on the numbers
8 that are on paper at the moment.

9
10 And COVID has changed the numbers significantly.
11 That's not been taken into consideration. So we've got to
12 look forward at what is actually happening on the ground,
13 so that will wipe that out. The other thing that really
14 bothers me, and this is something that I don't think
15 anybody else has mentioned, is you know, you make a
16 decision like this, it's going to cost a lot of money to
17 make a change. Now, I'm on a pension and I've got to tell
18 you, spending money for no good reason makes no sense to
19 me, particularly if you're spending money in the short-term
20 and obviously going to have to change it in the longer
21 term.

22
23 So, to my mind, looking at the population numbers in
24 the area, North Sydney has no reason to go. The changes
25 that - the reasons for a redistribution trigger are not
26 there, and the money spent is wasting taxpayer 's money.
27 Thank you.

28
29 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next speaker is
30 Cameron MacLean. Thank you. Cameron, after you've
31 announced - I'll let you announce your name in a moment.
32 I'm just going to tell you that the secretariat will say
33 when you hit the four minute mark.

34
35 MR MACLEAN: Excellent. Shall I go?

36
37 CHAIR: Yes.

38
39 <CAMERON MACLEAN:

40
41 MR MACLEAN: Thank you. My name is Cameron Maclean. I am
42 a current Epping ward counsellor of the City of Parramatta
43 and a former deputy lord mayor of the City of Parramatta.
44 The Australian Electoral Commission, AEC, has proposed
45 changes that would see the removal of Epping, North Epping
46 and Carlingford from Bennelong, redistributing these areas
47 between the Berowra and Parramatta electorates. This

1 proposal, if enacted, would not only disrupt the
2 established boundaries, but it would fracture a close
3 community of interest that exists in our community and has
4 done so for quite some time.

5
6 As someone who has the privilege of representing
7 Epping ward as a councillor, I have seen first-hand the
8 remarkable strength and unity of our community. Epping is
9 a tapestry of streets, homes and businesses, yes. But it
10 is also a community pulsing with life and connectedness
11 across cultural, social and economic threads. In my role
12 as a councillor, I have engaged with numerous residents who
13 value our strong community bonds. These ties extend from
14 Epping to Eastwood, Ryde and throughout, the Ryde and
15 Parramatta local government areas.

16
17 The cultural connection in our area is particularly
18 profound. The 2021 ABS census showed that Epping and
19 Carlingford have significant Chinese ancestries,
20 32.6 per cent and 40.6 per cent respectively, while
21 Eastwood is even higher at 48.8 per cent. The Korean
22 community is also prominent, with 7.5 per cent in Epping
23 and 6.9 per cent in Carlingford, alongside Eastwood at 8.8
24 per cent.

25
26 In contrast, the demographic profile of Berowra, an
27 electorate where Epping and North Epping might be
28 relocated, is markedly different. For instance, Pennant
29 Hills has only 9.3 per cent of the population identifying
30 as Chinese and 3.6 per cent as Korean. These figures
31 reflect a different community fabric and one that does not
32 align with the cultural landscape of Epping and its
33 surrounding areas. The proposed boundary changes would
34 disrupt these established cultural networks, forcing
35 communities that have long shared a common identity to
36 navigate new unfamiliar surroundings.

37
38 Beyond cultural ties, the economic inter-dependencies
39 between Epping, Eastwood and Ryde are another crucial
40 factor. These suburbs aren't just neighbours; they are
41 commercial partners. Moreover, a significant number of
42 Epping and North Epping residents are employed in the
43 employment hubs of Macquarie Park and North Ryde. These
44 areas which fall within the Bennelong electorate are the
45 economic lifelines for our community. The proposed
46 redistribution would sever these connections, placing
47 Epping and North Epping in electorates where their economic

1 interests might not be as well represented or understood.

2
3 Our shared infrastructure and community services
4 further underscore the deep connections between Epping,
5 North Epping, Carlingford and the rest of Bennelong. Many
6 of our local Lions Clubs, Rotary Clubs, football clubs and
7 rugby clubs, not by accident, share the name
8 "Eastwood-Epping" in their titles. That is because they
9 draw upon members and participants from those areas. They
10 are not reflected as the Epping-Hornsby or the
11 Epping-Cheltenham or the Epping-Berowra clubs. Their links
12 do not extend that far north.

13
14 I encourage the Electoral Commission to ensure -
15 Berowra does not cross the M2 and that North Epping and
16 Epping remain part of the Bennelong. Not only is the
17 member's office currently located within the centre of
18 Bennelong, which falls in Epping, the region has much more
19 in common with Eastwood, Macquarie Park, Marsfield and
20 Parramatta than it does with Hornsby, Pennant Hills and
21 Cherrybrook. In my role as a councillor, I have worked
22 diligently to ensure that the voices of Epping residents
23 are heard, and I have been proud to stand alongside my
24 community in advocating for the issues affect them most.
25 The connections between Epping and North Epping, with
26 Eastwood and Ryde local government areas are far too
27 important to sacrifice.

28
29 On behalf of Jerome Laxale MP, I urge the AEC to
30 reconsider the proposal. Let us keep our community intact,
31 ensuring that Epping and North Epping remain within the
32 Bennelong electorate where they have always belonged and
33 where they will be best represented and unified. Thank you
34 for listening to me.

35
36 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. The next two speakers
37 will be Sharon Leifer first, and then Don Harwin second.

38
39 <SHARON LEIFER:

40
41 MS LEIFER: Hi. My name is Sharon Leifer. I wasn't
42 planning to speak today, because I have already made an
43 anonymous submission, and I didn't want to cover those
44 points again, but I am a resident of Mackellar for the last
45 21 years and I am very grateful to get this opportunity to
46 speak to you in person as well. I have come to listen to
47 lots of things that people have said today, and there is

1 just one kind of extra point that I really wanted to
2 reiterate, and that was really about decisions about all
3 the boundaries and changing the electorates.

4
5 It's not just a quantitative argument; it's really a
6 qualitative argument as well. It's very much about people
7 getting good representation. And I think we have lots of
8 kind of party politics and everything else, lots of people
9 talking about who said what, Teals, Liberals and everything
10 else, and I will say that I am a member and very supportive
11 of my local MP, Dr Sophie Scamps, just to put it out there.

12
13 But what I really wanted to say is that the quality of
14 the representation will be significantly weakened if you
15 split up communities like North Sydney and if you add and
16 bolt on communities like St Ives to the Northern Beaches.
17 And I think that that should be one of the main
18 considerations that's taken into consideration here: how
19 will three MPs best represent North Sydney? I can't see
20 how that's going to - you know, we've heard lots and lots
21 of arguments about it, but the quality of that
22 representation is just not going to be good. It causes all
23 sorts of problems.

24
25 And the same with Mackellar. How can one MP represent
26 one part of an electorate and then a bolt-on, completely
27 different community? We've heard quite a lot already about
28 how different that community is. I won't repeat all of
29 those arguments, but in the interests of representation,
30 which I think is one of the key things that you do,
31 avoiding party politics but to make sure that we get
32 quality representation for electors, I think that that
33 should be the main thing that's considered here, and the
34 knock-on effect from all of that. And that was the only
35 point I wanted to make. Thank you.

36
37 CHAIR: Thanks, very much. Mr Harwin.

38
39 MR HARWIN: I wonder if those could be handed up. That's
40 why I brought them. It will just assist in one of the
41 points that I make. Thank you. Much appreciated.

42
43 <DON HARWIN:

44
45 MR HARWIN: My name is Don Harwin. I am appearing today in
46 my capacity as State president of the Liberal party. I've
47 had the pleasure of working on 11 State and Federal

1 redistributions, and appearing at these gatherings before,
2 and under Premier Berejiklian I had the pleasure of serving
3 as Special Minister of State. So, okay, well, it's been an
4 interesting day and I've enjoyed very much being here and
5 the opportunity to discuss with you towards the end of it
6 today.

7
8 May I just make a point at the outset in terms of
9 section 72(3)(a)(1), in relation to the Member for North
10 Sydney's objection, which is that it is substantially the
11 same as the proposition she put at the suggestion stage,
12 and there is virtually no difference to it, and that's
13 something you might take into consideration in terms of the
14 statutory requirements. In terms of projections, well,
15 there is a healthy debate about whether we should use
16 electoral projections at all in redistribution, because
17 they do tend to be wrong, and the point that a number of
18 people have made today may be correct. Of course, bearing
19 in mind, though, that we're talking about Australian
20 citizens, aged 18 or over, at the midpoint.

21
22 And it's all very well to have figures bandied around
23 by my friend Rod Simpson earlier, but we need to earlier
24 that in terms of growth, we are talking about that and
25 nothing else. And it is always difficult in these
26 circumstances to deal with projections, but the time to
27 deal with projections is always at the suggestion stage,
28 and preferably right at the beginning so that as you have
29 had - for example, in Western Australia, are able to call a
30 halt and - maybe I'm getting confused, maybe it was
31 Northern Territory, but call a halt and then give everyone
32 an opportunity to put their point of view. But I would
33 submit to you that it may well be that your predictions
34 aren't perfect in North Sydney, but then I kind of looked
35 at your predictions in Sydney and thought, "Hmm".

36
37 So anyway, we'll leave that there. I just don't think
38 that at this stage of the redistribution, you could give
39 any weight to any arguments on that point.

40
41 Now, I think for - I'm reminded of something that Ben
42 Raue wrote on his website on 9 July. We heard from Ben
43 earlier this morning. His article was called, "What sort
44 of redistribution objection can actually work? He wrote,
45 inter alia:

46
47 While there is room for public involvement

1 in the redistribution process, it's not
2 just a matter of asking for something
3 loudly and en masse. You actually need to
4 propose practical solutions ...

5
6 So my worry with the suggestions from the Member for North
7 Sydney, is for them even to be considered, they need to do
8 no harm, and in my view they are considerably worse than
9 your original proposal. Your original proposal in fact
10 puts all of the - what is arguably the strongest North
11 Sydney community of interest, the suburbs in the North
12 Sydney municipality, all in one seat. You could have just
13 as easily chosen to call it "North Sydney" not "Warringah",
14 and not have abolished North Sydney at all. I see that
15 time go up, but I do note that Counsellor Baker spoke for
16 8 minutes and several others spoke for 6 or 7, so I'll try
17 and make it as quick as I possibly can --

18
19 CHAIR: Just before you continue --

20
21 MR HARWIN: -- and move on to another topic.

22
23 CHAIR: Just before you continue, how long do you think
24 you'll be?

25
26 MR HARWIN: I'll only be three or four minutes.

27
28 CHAIR: That's satisfactory. There is no speaker after
29 this.

30
31 MR HARWIN: Yes, absolutely. And so, I'll quickly make the
32 point that the harm in the proposition has, in relation to
33 the Mackellar electorate and in relation to the Berowra
34 electorate, has been very adequately addressed by
35 Dr Scamps, Mr Turnbull, Mr Amon, Mr Leeser and the mayor,
36 Mr Ngai, so I won't add anything on that.

37
38 I think it's important that you consider at the moment
39 at this stage, as you must, everything in front of you and
40 deciding if you are prepared to put a significantly
41 different proposal out for a second round of objections.
42 And I should make the point to you that in my view if you
43 were minded to take up the suggestions of Ms Tink, you
44 would be doing that, you would be coming up with a
45 significantly different proposal. And I would say that
46 also in terms of the - we haven't heard much about them,
47 but the suggestions of NSW Labor. Again, they are a

1 significantly different proposal. As there hasn't been
2 oral argument today, I won't go through it in detail, but
3 I would refer you to the comments that we made on the
4 objections that's been lodged, which actually does go
5 through a couple of them.

6
7 And I would say the same in terms of Mr Raue's
8 objection, which inter alia he talks about small areas
9 being added onto seats and talks about Campbelltown, takes
10 out Campbelltown and then puts on another small area in
11 Bankstown Local Government Area. So I really don't know
12 what he's fixed there, other than moving Campbelltown, an
13 area he says he knows well.

14
15 So I would make those points, that any one of those,
16 in my view will trigger the necessity for a second stage
17 and a delay in finalisation of the proposal. And I don't
18 think the conditions have been met to justify having a
19 significantly different proposal. But in five minutes,
20 I'll leave it there.

21
22 So Ben Raue asked what sort of redistribution actually
23 can work, so I'll leave you on a happy note, and that's the
24 map I've put in front of you. And it's not something that
25 has resulted in lots of letters, just one, an objection
26 from Central Coast Plateau Chamber of Commerce. And I am a
27 Central Coast resident. I did notice when I was reading
28 this, and the comments of a number of some of what I might
29 call the psephologist commentators or participants in the
30 process.

31
32 It was a good idea. I think Mr McSweeney thought this
33 one was a good one worth bringing to your attention, so
34 I'll do it because I do know the area, and it's one where
35 it would have been - it was very easy for the
36 Redistribution Committee to make a decision not to change
37 the boundary between Robertson and Dobell, because both of
38 those electorates basically meet the demographic criteria
39 of the Act.

40
41 Now, the boundary, which is the red line on your map,
42 is the old Local Government Area boundary between Gosford
43 and Wyong, right? And it has tended to be the electoral
44 boundary at both a State and a Federal level as a result of
45 that, right? But as you can see, and I've done it
46 deliberately by just photocopying Apple Maps, because it
47 shows it really well in terms of how the physical features

1 of the area really are not the basis of the existing
2 boundary. The basis of the existing boundary is in fact
3 the road. The road, which is of course almost - well, it's
4 as old as traditional Aboriginal songlines, frankly, from
5 Brooklyn right up through Calga and then along that old
6 road. And settlement followed the establishment of the
7 local government boundary but the local government boundary
8 is now gone.

9
10 And so this is the last thing. The State
11 commissioners, even though there is only about 200 people
12 involved, it's of no consequence to anyone, but the people
13 who live in Kulnura. And good on the chamber of commerce
14 for actually representing their views. There hasn't been a
15 landslide of letters or a large number of people today, but
16 I just felt after everything we've heard, one that's as
17 genuine as this ought to be highlighted. And I would
18 encourage you to just make that tiny, little, definitely
19 insignificant change as a result of the chamber of
20 commerce's proposal and thank you for your patience in
21 listening to me even though I went a little over time.

22
23 CHAIR: Thank you very much. I think it's probably time
24 to close and to thank everyone who has come today, and
25 especially anyone who has spoken today. Very much
26 appreciated. Now there's a question at the back of the
27 room.

28
29 MS HEWITT: Just a quick question. Can it be noted in the
30 minutes that the last speaker had an additional four and a
31 half minutes to other speakers?

32
33 CHAIR: I think it appears there as of course.

34
35 MR HARWIN: Well, in fact I think I had the equivalent of
36 all of Mrs Tink's speakers that went over time, which I
37 took advantage of.

38
39 CHAIR: Anyway, we're going to close the meeting. Thank
40 you.

41
42 AT 5.20PM THE MEETING WAS CLOSED
43
44
45
46
47

RECORD OF INQUIRY

AUSTRALIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION

NEW SOUTH WALES REDISTRIBUTION ONLINE INQUIRY

CONDUCTED ON WEDNESDAY 21 AUGUST 2024

THE HON. SUSAN KENNY AM KC, CHAIR

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

MR T. ROGERS
DR D. GRUEN AO
MS R. MAIN
MRS N. UNDERWOOD
MR B. OYETUNJI

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

(RECORDED AND TRANSCRIBED BY LEGAL TRANSCRIPTS)

1 CHAIR: Thank you Cameron. Good afternoon everyone. Welcome to
2 the resumed hearing of the augmented Electoral Commission
3 for New South Wales. I'd like to begin by acknowledging
4 the traditional custodians of the lands on which we meet
5 today and I pay my respects to their elders, both past
6 and present.

7 As some of you know, my name is Susan Kenny, and I am
8 chairperson of the augmented Electoral Commission. I'm
9 joined today by Mr Tom Rogers, the Australian Electoral
10 Commissioner.

11 The other members of the augmented Commission will
12 catch up with the inquiry via transcript. As some of you
13 will know, they are Dr David Gruen, the Australian
14 Statistician, Mr Bola Oyetunji, the Auditor-General for
15 New South Wales, Ms Rebecca Main, the Australian
16 Electoral Officer for New South Wales, and Mrs Narelle
17 Underwood, the Surveyor-General of New South Wales.

18 I would again remind you of a number of matters. I've
19 already said some of them, but it's useful to go over
20 them, I think.

21 The first is that Part IV of the
22 *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* sets out the requirements
23 that the Commission must follow in conducting
24 redistributions. This particular redistribution for New
25 South Wales is required because New South Wales'
26 entitlement to members of the House of Representatives
27 has decreased from 47 to 46. In accordance with
28 section 66 of the Electoral Act, the Redistribution
29 Committee for New South Wales prepared a proposal for
30 redistribution of the state into these 46 federal
31 electoral divisions. As I think almost all of you are

1 aware, the proposal and its reasons was released by the
2 Redistribution Committee in June this year.

3 In accordance with section 68 of the Electoral Act,
4 interested individuals and organisations were invited to
5 make written objections to the proposed redistribution
6 and to provide written comments on those objections. As
7 I've said before, a total of 738 objections and 235
8 comments on objections were received within the required
9 time frames. The augmented Electoral Commission is
10 required by sub-section 72(1) of the Electoral Act, to
11 consider all objections lodged in relation to the
12 redistribution proposal, and all comments on objections.

13 The resumption of this inquiry provides a further
14 opportunity for members of the public to make submissions
15 about those objections. This is a public inquiry
16 conducted by the augmented Electoral Commission, it's
17 designed to give you an opportunity to make submissions
18 about those objections, and this session of inquiry will
19 hear from attendees who registered prior to last
20 Wednesday's session, but weren't able to participate due
21 to the high number of speakers.

22 As I think you are aware, the Electoral Act specifies
23 how the redistribution process is conducted and what
24 factors must be considered. Sub-section 73(4) of the
25 Electoral Act states, the primary consideration of the
26 augmented Electoral Commission is that each electoral
27 division meet certain numerical requirements in the form
28 of a redistribution quota and the projected enrolment
29 quota. These are mandatory requirements, but they're
30 subject to tolerances. In other words, there is an
31 acceptable range, but we can't go beyond those ranges.

1 Subject to an electoral division satisfying the numbers,
2 sub-section 73(4) also provides we have regard to
3 communities of interest, and we also have regard to
4 communication and travel in electoral divisions, physical
5 features and the area of electoral divisions. But as I've
6 said, the critical requirement is a numerical one.

7 I would remind you that the inquiry today is recorded,
8 transcripts of proceedings will be made available as part
9 of the augmented Electoral Commission's report, and will
10 be on the Australian Electoral Commission website once
11 its report has been tabled in Parliament. I would also
12 like to draw your attention to the fact that we may have
13 some members of the media listening today. Should any
14 media members have a question, I would ask that they
15 speak to the AEC media team, whose contact details are
16 available on the AEC website.

17 When a speaker is invited to make a presentation, we
18 would remind the speaker, to unmute yourself, and please
19 state your name before you commence. That will help us a
20 great deal. We would like to ensure that all those
21 present are able to make submissions if they wish, and to
22 this end, we originally set a time limit of five minutes.
23 The same rule will apply here in the interests of
24 fairness. There are a group of eight people who are to be
25 heard and - on this occasion, and I'd like to ensure that
26 you remain at the five minute mark. You will hear a noise
27 at the four minute mark, and again at the five minute
28 mark.

29 If you proceed over the five minute mark, you will be
30 muted, and I will warn you about that. I'd emphasise that
31 this is an opportunity to present new arguments and

1 materials, not to read out your objection or comment on
2 objection. As I said before, all of us present have read
3 these documents carefully. And of course, they're
4 available publicly on the AEC website. When the inquiry
5 is concluded, we'll consider everything that has been
6 said - that's the objections, comments on objections, and
7 what has been said at this inquiry.

8 We'll endeavour to make a public announcement as soon
9 as we can. Now, that's enough from me. The first speaker,
10 I believe, is Georgina San Roque. I would like to invite
11 her to begin, and remind her first to unmute and state
12 her name for the record before commencing, thank you.

13 MS SAN ROQUE: Thank you very much, um, I'm Georgina San Roque
14 and I would - I do thank you for the chance to make this
15 submission. I've lived in the North Sydney electorate for
16 over 30 years, and I just want - really, it is quite a
17 personal submission I'm making, but, you know, I do very
18 much identify with it, and hope that um, well, I find the
19 idea of it being disbanded and attached to various other
20 electorates is - is not at all appealing, and I don't
21 think it altogether makes sense.

22 Just as an illustration, my daughter went to primary
23 and high school here, I shop in the - within the
24 electorate, in Crows Nest, in Cammeray, in Lane Cove, and
25 I go to the city by public transport, which is extremely
26 convenient. Um, my problem is that just personally, I
27 don't identify at all with the Warringah and Northern
28 Beaches electorate. I'm very much established here in
29 this sort of, inner, um, North Shore electorate, as it
30 is. Um, I've been involved in, for instance, bush care in
31 the area, which is through various different sites, and I

1 belong to a local seniors group, also.

2 So, it's an important community for me. In terms of
3 the council, North Sydney Council has been very helpful
4 to my interests generally. Particularly in bushland and
5 natural resources - or natural areas. And, um, I feel
6 that, you know, this sort of disbandment of the
7 electorate will make a great difference,
8 administratively, to the council. And it's really not
9 going to make fair work, and there's - there's efforts
10 towards, you know, the community, at all, um, easy or
11 productive that way.

12 I understand that the population is definitely
13 predicted - of the North Sydney electorate, is predicted
14 to increase considerably in the next few years, and we've
15 certainly seen, you know, a number of um, apartments
16 going up, more is to occur as well, and um, in that
17 sense, I don't understand, really, why - why that would -
18 why this proposal has really been made, because it could
19 well have to be simply reversed in another few years. And
20 just in conclusion, I would say that the North Sydney
21 electorate really has a cohesion and identifies with this
22 area, and a strong community, and um, yes, I really think
23 it would be a great change, a fracture of those
24 advantages. Thank you.

25 MR ROGERS: (Indistinct words.)

26 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. I think we've all
27 understood very well what you're saying. It was well-
28 said, if I may say so. Now, the next speaker is Katrina
29 Chandler. Katrina?

30 MS CHANDLER: (Indistinct), my name is Katrina Chandler, I'd
31 like to thank the augmented Electoral Commission for the

1 opportunity to (indistinct) this inquiry into the Federal
2 (indistinct) New South Wales. (Indistinct) these
3 submissions object to, on (indistinct), that there are
4 factors contributing to the process that were not taken
5 into consideration, which (indistinct) - - -
6 MR ROGERS: Katrina, it's a little hard - - -
7 MS CHANDLER: (Indistinct words) - - -
8 MR ROGERS: It's hard - - -
9 MS CHANDLER: - - - community and it should (indistinct) people
10 (indistinct) division of North Sydney (indistinct) - - -
11 CHAIR: Katrina, I'm really sorry, can we (indistinct) - - -
12 MR ROGERS: Katrina?
13 CHAIR: We can't hear you.
14 MR ROGERS: Katrina - we can't - Katrina?
15 CHAIR: Katrina? Someone tell Katrina, if they've got a way of
16 telling - - -
17 MS CHANDLER: (Indistinct words) petition (indistinct) of over
18 2,000 signatures. I object to comment 210 (indistinct) -
19 - -
20 MR ROGERS: Katrina?
21 MS CHANDLER: - - - hundreds of constituent objections - - -
22 CHAIR: Katrina? Now, can I - is Cameron or someone there who
23 can communicate with Katrina and tell her we can't hear
24 her?
25 MR ROGERS: Think her connection's just dropped out, is what's
26 occurred.
27 CHAIR: You can come back.
28 MR ROGERS: Yes.
29 CHAIR: Could one of the secretariats get in touch with her and
30 say, we couldn't hear her at all well, can she find
31 another place to dial in from? If I can put it that way.

1 SECRETARIAT 1: We're looking into it now.

2 MR ROGERS: Meanwhile, we could go to the next person, perhaps,
3 Sue?

4 CHAIR: Yes. My list says Alex Whitehead, is Alex - - -

5 MR ROGERS: No, I think the only one we've got here, if I'm not
6 wrong, is possibly Jane - is there somewhere? Jane
7 Parker?

8 CHAIR: Could one of the secretariats discover who is ready to
9 - - -

10 MR ROGERS: Here we go.

11 CHAIR: Yes.

12 MR ROGERS: And then Jane, if - just, if that is you, could you
13 go off mute, if that's possible?

14 CHAIR: Could one of the secretariats - - -

15 MS PARKER: Can you hear me?

16 CHAIR: Yes we can.

17 MR ROGERS: There we go.

18 CHAIR: That's (indistinct).

19 MS PARKER: Okay, right. Sorry about that. Um, right. First of
20 all, thank you very much for providing the opportunity
21 for me today, to speak to you, I really appreciate it, as
22 I would have liked to have spoken last week, so thank you
23 very much. My name is Jane Parker, I've been a resident
24 of the North Sydney electorate for over 20 years. My
25 children have gone to schools in the electorate in both
26 North Sydney LGA and Lane Cove LGA, and have played
27 sports with community clubs across the electorate
28 including both those LGAs and Willoughby local government
29 area.

30 And so, I feel a great affinity to the area of North
31 Sydney. This affinity was only amplified with the ground

1 swell of so many people like myself feeling the need for
2 a community independent to represent us in the Federal
3 Parliament. This sense of community that I experienced
4 over the last few years is nothing like I've experienced
5 before. Um, so we are very much a community of interest.
6 We - we - the strength of the bonds between the people
7 and electorate has only got stronger than what was there
8 beforehand, and I have concerns as to why North Sydney
9 has been selected as - with the whole of the New South
10 Wales redistribution, as the main electorate to be
11 disbanded.

12 My understanding is, one of the key criteria is
13 population (indistinct) - as part of the redistribution.
14 And the population growth of North Sydney is expected to,
15 you know, grow over the period. And I'm aware of other
16 electorates that have fewer current constituents and
17 lower projected growth. And I'd just like to highlight
18 the population, just from one of the LGAs within the
19 electorate, being the Willoughby LGA. The population
20 forecasts, from 2024 - from where we are currently, to
21 2036, to go from 80,082 to 87,415, which is a growth of
22 just over nine per cent.

23 And within that LGA, just one of the - they call the
24 small areas - which is called St Leonards, is due to
25 experience a growth of 64 per cent over this period, and
26 the adjoining areas nearby to St Leonards, in the
27 neighbouring North Sydney LGA, would be increasing by
28 similar amounts, with new apartments online - with - the
29 recently opened Crows Nest metro station that no doubt
30 you've all heard about this week. So it just - my
31 question is, I don't quite understand why North Sydney

1 has been chosen, when it's clearly identified that
2 there's significant growth within this electorate, so if
3 population is one of the reasons, you know, I just don't
4 understand.

5 And there's sense of community, which is another key
6 criteria, I think, with the whole redistribution, is
7 paramount. Like, it's significant in this area, and you
8 know, my kids, if they were playing, you know, going to
9 school, and then having to play a sport, or -
10 (indistinct) electorate, like, the whole funding with
11 applying for grants and sporting groups, it's all within,
12 you know, the federal electorate, and it just - it
13 doesn't make sense to me, so I just wanted to share those
14 - those thoughts.

15 I can provide any details on that Willoughby
16 projections if you would like for your records, um,
17 redirect you to the webpages that have that information.
18 Um, but that's basically all I had to say, and thank you
19 for the time.

20 CHAIR: What I might ask the secretariat to do is speak to you
21 about the material, to which you - the websites to which
22 you referred.

23 MS PARKER: Yep.

24 CHAIR: If one of the secretariats would do that, I'd be
25 grateful.

26 MS PARKER: Okay.

27 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. Is there another speaker at
28 this point, secretariat? No?

29 MR ROGERS: It looks like someone else is online there, Sue.
30 Without a name, just a number.

31 SECRETARIAT 1: We believe that's Katrina.

1 CHAIR: Can you contact - see who it is, and if it is Katrina,
2 ask her how she wishes to join in.

3 MR ROGERS: Katrina, can you hear us? If you can, you're on
4 mute.

5 CHAIR: We have the phone number there. It would be useful if
6 one of the secretariats could call. Can we pause for a
7 moment whilst we see where she may be - Katrina may be,
8 and - - -

9 MS CHANDLER: (Indistinct words).

10 MR ROGERS: Never mind.

11 CHAIR: Katrina? Or is there's another speaker available?

12 MR ROGERS: There's no other speaker, but we'll just try and
13 contact her, Sue, if you can just - slight pause for
14 everybody.

15 MS PARKER: Sorry, can you hear me? It's Jane.

16 MR ROGERS: Hi Jane.

17 MS PARKER: Sorry - if I could contact Katrina - if she's
18 having technical issues, then she could email me - - -

19 MR ROGERS: All right - hang on - - -

20 MS PARKER: - - - the words.

21 MR ROGERS: Hang on, hang on. We've got her back on again, just
22 hang on for a second. Katrina, are you there?

23 MS CHANDLER: Hello, hi.

24 CHAIR: I'm sorry about - - -

25 MS CHANDLER: I'm so sorry about - I am so sorry, I'm just in a
26 tricky spot right now, trying to work and - - -

27 CHAIR: No, no, please don't apologise.

28 MS CHANDLER: Okay, thank you for trying so hard, I just
29 couldn't get my phone unmuted. I'm not used to working
30 off a phone, I'm so used to being in front of the
31 computer, so it's a bit tricky.

1 CHAIR: I empathise, I can tell you. Would you like to begin?

2 MS CHANDLER: Yes, sure, (indistinct) - - -

3 CHAIR: Remember to say your name, though, first.

4 MS CHANDLER: Of course, I will. Thank you so much. Okay, good
5 afternoon, my name is Katrina Chandler, I would like to
6 thank the augmented Electoral Commission for the
7 opportunity to speak at this inquiry and to the federal
8 redistribution of New South Wales. Having read many
9 submissions, objections, and comments, it is clear to me
10 that there are factors contributing to the process that
11 were not taken into consideration when the Commission put
12 forward their draft proposal to abolish the Division of
13 North Sydney. There is clearly a very strong community of
14 interest, shown by people living on the Lower North
15 Shore.

16 Having lived in the Division of North Sydney before
17 moving to Warringah, I can attest to this strong
18 community spirit in the business centres, sporting
19 (indistinct) and community groups that have grown and
20 strengthened over many decades on the Lower North Shore.
21 This is also shown by the hundreds of objections lodged
22 with the Commission, including a petition with over 2,000
23 signatures. I object to comment 210, calling this a
24 'paper wall', as it undermines hundreds of constituent
25 objections, who were not aware of the Commission's
26 proposal to abolish the Division of North Sydney.

27 Everyone who has spoken at the hearing or lodged an
28 objection or comment has done so with their free will, as
29 an engaged citizen in democracy, and this is not
30 something to destroy, as it is needed for a healthy
31 democracy, and is a clear, new important type of

1 community interest. The growing business district of
2 Crows Nest and St Leonards is an essential hub in the
3 division of North Sydney. The newly opened metro
4 reinforces the transformation of long-term economic
5 transport and housing development impact in the area,
6 which highlights the short-sightedness of dividing the
7 division into three, um - three, at this thriving and
8 growing centre.

9 In addition, is that it is a major health precinct in
10 New South Wales, best served by one Federal MP. Your
11 proposal has taken a pizza cutter approach, instead of
12 acknowledging that Crows Nest is a major growing and
13 economic centre, and so I ask that you please re-examine
14 your proposal. I am support - I am in support of Kylea
15 Tink's objection, OB686, as it offers a solution to
16 increasing electors by merging Bradfield and Berowra,
17 which have similar communities of interest. By merging
18 Berowra and Bradfield, there will be one central business
19 and health centre, Hornsby, servicing the Upper North
20 Shore.

21 The Upper North Shore is a distinct community of
22 interest, in contrast with the Lower North Shore. There
23 are many similarities on the Upper North Shore, so it
24 would be reasonable to join Berowra and Bradfield.
25 Residents in Wahroonga and Turramurra identify themselves
26 as part of the same community as Hornsby and Waitara
27 residents, all as Upper North Shore. They have similar
28 demographics, shared public transport connections, and
29 communities of interest in the area.

30 I would also like to add that the redistribution
31 process favours major parties, as it was clear they knew

1 that there was an expectation to provide an alternative
2 solution to boundaries in their original submission. I
3 hope that the Commission is able to demonstrate that the
4 strong public opinion shown to retain the division of
5 North Sydney and the alternative put forward by Kylea
6 Tink should carry equal weight to other stakeholders such
7 as the major parties.

8 In 2010, the proposed abolishment of the Victorian
9 electorate of Murray was reversed at this stage of the
10 process on economic grounds. Not too dissimilar to the
11 fact that Crows Nest and St Leonards is a growing and
12 important economic centre. I would also like to speak on
13 behalf of The Honourable Anthony Whealy KC, who wasn't
14 able to attend the hearing last week due to health
15 reasons. Anthony is the former judge of the New South
16 Wales Supreme Court and Court of Appeal, and the chair of
17 the Centre for Public Integrity.

18 Anthony's arguments: 'I've been a member of the North
19 Sydney community for over 28 years. The community is very
20 proud of its history, its churches, its schools, its
21 community and business groups. They fulfil our lives as
22 local citizens. We are best served by one federal MP.
23 From a personal perspective, I would be devastated by the
24 proposed destruction and subdivision of our electorate.
25 This is a feeling that I know is shared by all of our
26 community. From a public interest point of view, the
27 arguments in support of a boundary redistribution do not
28 take into account extensive planned housing in North
29 Sydney, Willoughby and Lane Cove LGAs.

30 The anticipated growth thoroughly supports retention
31 rather than abolition and redistribution. Crows Nest and

1 St Leonards ought properly be viewed as a growing
2 commercial and residential centre, and an important
3 health precinct, that would be best served by one federal
4 MP, not three. They are now inextricably linked by public
5 transport, including the new Metro.'

6 Thank you very much for your time. Hello?

7 MR ROGERS: Great.

8 CHAIR: All right, Katrina, thank you very much indeed.

9 MR ROGERS: Sue, I - as I understand it, that's the last
10 speaker, we've attempted to contact the other registered
11 speakers - - -

12 MS CHANDLER: Hello?

13 MR ROGERS: And - - -

14 CHAIR: Hello?

15 MR ROGERS: Hello.

16 MS CHANDLER: Hi, did you hear me?

17 CHAIR: I can hear you - - -

18 MR ROGERS: Yes Katrina, yes, thank you very much.

19 MS CHANDLER: Oh sorry, it's quite hard to tell.

20 CHAIR: Thank you very much for your time. Yes, I apologise,
21 but we're - - -

22 MS CHANDLER: Thank you.

23 CHAIR: - - - very grateful for your presentation today. So, I
24 take it that - - -

25 MR ROGERS: That's it, Sue.

26 CHAIR: That's it.

27 MR ROGERS: Just hold for one - we're doing one final check,
28 Sue, if you just wait for one second, please.

29 SECRETARIAT 1: Yes, we do have somebody else. They've just
30 used the wrong link, we're trying to get them in using
31 the right link or calling them directly, so it should

1 hopefully have them up soon.

2 MR ROGERS: (Indistinct) online now?

3 SECRETARIAT 1: Yep.

4 MR ROGERS: I think it's Jane, Sue.

5 CHAIR: This is Jane Hearn, or Jane Parker?

6 MR ROGERS: Jane Hearn.

7 CHAIR: Jane, can you hear me? Not at this point it seems.

8 MR ROGERS: Jane, if you are there, you are on mute.

9 CHAIR: Does the secretariat have any contact details for Jane

10 Hearn? That they could use?

11 MR ROGERS: I think that - I think the secretariats are doing

12 just that.

13 CHAIR: Good.

14 MR ROGERS: Using whatever means they've got. No success. Jane,

15 if you're - they're calling - I think they've called her

16 directly.

17 CHAIR: And I think the link has been resent as well.

18 MR ROGERS: Yes.

19 CHAIR: So, we'll give it a minute or two, to see if that

20 works.

21 MR ROGERS: Might I be bold enough to suggest - and forgive me

22 for not quite understanding the technology - perhaps

23 actually if we push Jane Hearn out of the meeting, and

24 then phone her on that number, that - - -

25 CHAIR: I'm very happy to do that, it might work. I'm just

26 going to go on mute while the secretariats do that.

27 MR ROGERS: Great, I'm just going to do the same. Jane, if you

28 can hear us, could I ask you to unmute? Your phone is on

29 mute, we can see you in the room, but we just can't hear

30 you because you're on mute.

31 CHAIR: I actually can't see Jane on mute - - -

1 MR ROGERS: No, you can see her (indistinct) - - -
2 CHAIR: I can't see - I can see a phone number.
3 MR ROGERS: Yes.
4 CHAIR: And it is on mute.
5 MR ROGERS: Okay, so - - -
6 CHAIR: All right, so, no success.
7 MR ROGERS: Okay.
8 CHAIR: That's a shame. We'll give it five minutes, just in
9 case there's another speaker or she wishes to return from
10 somewhere else.
11 SECRETARIAT 2: You can address me directly (indistinct) - - -
12 MS HEARN: (Indistinct) now, I'll be coming through my - - -
13 SECRETARIAT 2: It will be - - -
14 MS HEARN: - - - microphone. (Indistinct) - - -
15 SECRETARIAT 2: (Indistinct) 30 seconds.
16 SECRETARIAT 1: Give us one moment.
17 SECRETARIAT 2: So just make sure you state your name clearly
18 at the start. All right. So I'll put you on now.
19 CHAIR: Hello?
20 MS HEARN: Yes, hello, it's Jane Hearn here.
21 CHAIR: Thank you.
22 MS HEARN: Hello?
23 MR ROGERS: Sue, you're on mute.
24 MS HEARN: Good afternoon (indistinct) - - -
25 CHAIR: Sorry Jane - I was on mute. Can I ask you to state your
26 name and continue, please?
27 MS HEARN: Thank you. My name is Jane Hearn, and my - sorry,
28 we've got background noise - my name is Jane Hearn, I am
29 a long term resident of Wollstonecraft and the Waverton
30 area, which is on what is proposed to be the most
31 southern point of the new proposed Wahroonga seat. Um, I

1 have made a comment, which was, I think, numbered as
2 no.184. The point - a couple points that I would like to
3 make this afternoon is to emphasise the dislocation of
4 Waverton and Wollstonecraft from Wahroonga. I know that
5 this has been mentioned on a number of occasions, but I
6 want to really ensure that the Commission doesn't
7 underestimate the impact, particularly of Military Road,
8 which is - runs through Mosman down to the Spit Bridge in
9 the Middle Harbour.

10 The point I'd like to make is that the seat of North
11 Sydney is already fragmented by the Wahroonga Freeway and
12 Military Road. Whilst on paper, and looking at maps, and
13 - some of these areas may not seem to be very far apart,
14 and perhaps easily accessible, but I'd like to really
15 emphasise the point that in a high-density urban area
16 such as this, although as the crow flies, one might have
17 proximity to something, in fact, the physical barriers
18 are in some cases virtually insurmountable.

19 The reason - so the patterns of movement that have
20 been mentioned already, I would like to endorse what was
21 said earlier today, I guess, in some of the comments,
22 that the typical movements of people in this area is not
23 along - up towards Manly or Wahroonga, but is indeed,
24 sort of up that - sort of railway line, sort of, to the
25 north of Sydney.

26 And the - we're discussing this with neighbours,
27 who've become aware that their seat was possibly going to
28 be abolished. We assumed that would mean that if it was
29 abolished, that we would join what is currently the seat
30 of Bradfield, so that there was some coherence in the
31 north-south direction, and that we would - because that

1 is where the connections are. And did not, in fact,
2 expect - we were quite surprised to find that Wahroonga
3 and expanding Wahroonga was the proposal.

4 It's been said to me, not to worry about this, because
5 there will be an electoral office in Mosman, and I have
6 to say that from a Waverton and Wollstonecraft point of
7 view, anybody on this side of the freeway, that that is
8 of no assistance. Now, you know, this is obviously a
9 self-interested comment, but I would like to make the
10 point also, that Waverton, Wollstonecraft, Crows Nest,
11 North Sydney, is home to a very large number of renters.
12 People who are new migrants, who transit through this
13 area, people who are medical staff that service the
14 health precinct at St Leonards, but actually live in the
15 North Sydney electorate.

16 Now, not all of those are electors, and I understand
17 that - the numerical calculation and the achieving the -
18 or ensuring the 'one vote, one value', is a primary
19 consideration. But I would like to make the point that
20 when we talk about communities of interest, very often,
21 the people who do not participate in these processes are
22 the permanent residents who have lived here for decades,
23 pay tax, but do - don't vote, and are not eligible for
24 - to be a candidate - - -

25 SECRETARIAT 1: One minute remaining.

26 MS HEARN: Sorry?

27 SECRETARIAT 1: One minute remaining.

28 MS HEARN: Okay, thank you. I will finish by saying that I've
29 now read the Tink submission, which I'd like to support,
30 except in relation to Kirribilli. There is a large public
31 housing community in Kirribilli, which needs easy access

1 to a North Sydney federal member.

2 And New South Wales has also reformed the strata
3 redevelopment laws that I would recommend some
4 consideration of the impact of redevelopment - strata,
5 because this area has a lot of older strata schemes that
6 are ripe for amalgamation, which in fact, has already
7 happened in North Sydney, which is also
8 - contributes to the planning and population growth
9 considerations that I think have been brought to your
10 attention. Thank you.

11 CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed, Jane. That was helpful. Is
12 there anyone else who wishes to speak? Are the
13 secretariats aware of anyone else?

14 SECRETARIAT 1: There's one person we couldn't get in contact
15 with, so at this point, that - that was all the speakers
16 for today.

17 CHAIR: All right, so we've spoken - you said there was one
18 person we can get in contact with, is that - - -

19 MR ROGERS: Could not get in contact with.

20 CHAIR: Could not get in contact with, thank you. All right,
21 well, if that's the case, then we can take it no further,
22 I think. And we must thank sincerely all those who've
23 contributed today for their helpful observations. And as
24 I indicated earlier, we'll try and make a public
25 announcement as soon as practicable. And we are indeed
26 very grateful that all - for all your contributions.
27 Having said that, I think it's time to call it to a
28 close. But thanks so much.

29 MR ROGERS: Thanks everybody.

30 - - -