



**THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Objection 5

Alex Kemeny

1 page

The Australian Electoral Commission (Attn: NSW Redistribution Secretariat)
Locked Bag 4007
Canberra ACT 2601

14 June 2024

Dear Commissioner,

I write in order to object to the proposal to abolish the federal electoral Division of North Sydney. I am a resident and elector of this electorate.

This electorate was critical in deciding the last federal election. At that election, the former government was defeated and one of their losses was this seat. Voters who live in such seats, which change hands at a government-changing election, each feel they have a direct bearing on the result of elections, and that their votes “really matter”.

I lived in the Division of Bradfield for 27 years. Bradfield has been held by men belonging to the same political party since its inception. So, no matter whether you voted for the incumbent, or registered a protest vote against him, you knew that it didn't matter how you cast your vote. The result of the seat was a foregone conclusion at every election.

We now find that, under the proposal you released today, page 53 states:

the Redistribution Committee proposes to move 32,968 projected electors from the Division of North Sydney to the proposed Division of Bradfield:

The number refers to the estimated number of electors on 10 April 2028. For the actual electors who exist today, presumably around 30,000, today's proposed boundary adjustments mean that these electors will be left with the distinct impression that their vote will have less importance at the 2025 federal election than it did in 2022.

Surely a far better idea would be to abolish a safe seat like Bradfield, or, say, Chifley, and to distribute voters from these “ultra-safe” seats into adjacent, less clear-cut seats, rather than the other way around, as you have chosen to do. For example, abolishing Chifley and moving its voters to the neighbouring Lindsay, Macquarie, Greenway and Mitchell Divisions would likely result in more competitive elections in both Greenway and Mitchell.

I also note that, as the incumbent member for North Sydney is an independent, she does not have the power of a major political party behind her in order to fight the abolition of her seat. No doubt the AEC will claim that it is apolitical and that the incumbent member has nothing to do with the decision regarding North Sydney.

Nevertheless, can one imagine the intense pressure that the AEC would be put under by the Australian Labor Party, had it, for example, chosen to abolish the [ultra-safe] Division of Grayndler. Was this seat, held by the current Prime Minister, considered for abolition? I seriously doubt it; the political “blow-back” would have been huge.

If you are determined to make the Sydney north-side the focus of your adjustments, please consider abolishing Bradfield and distributing its voters to the adjacent divisions.

Yours Sincerely,

Alex Kemeny

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