



**THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Objection 680

Louise M Laffey

2 pages

To: The NSW Redistribution Committee

Subject: Draft plans to abolish the federal seat of North Sydney in the proposed 2024 NSW redistribution

My name is Louise Laffey, and I am a resident of Waverton in the Federal seat of North Sydney.

I have lived and worked in the North Sydney electorate since 1993, and feel a very strong connection to the personal, business and government communities based here. For 30 years I have regularly participated in and contributed to hundreds of North Sydney community events; I have consciously chosen to 'shop local' to support numerous local businesses and industries and their families and staff and have deliberately operated my own business from a locally based address because I understand the wants and needs of these communities.

I ask that you please consider Kylea Tink MP's proposal to retain a North Sydney seat with adjusted boundaries to accommodate changes in overall numbers of electors in NSW.

There are several reasons why I do not believe that the seat of North Sydney should be abolished:

1. Our North Sydney business community: North Sydney is the third-largest business centre in Australia. As such, North Sydney's businesses and industrial zones deserve the focus of a dedicated local member to represent the concerns and needs of these business and organisational owners, staff and related supplier networks.

North Sydney has a total of 28,000 small to medium size businesses whose needs do not overlap entirely with those of the newly proposed areas of Bradfield, Bennelong or Warringah. Without true local representation, the unique economic 'value adds' that only local hands on business knowledge and experience can bring to a community will be lost or at best significantly hampered, resulting in valuable economic revenue and growth and key employment opportunities and benefits not being fully realised.

2. Population growth: The population across the North Sydney electorate is growing rapidly but the AEC's proposal does not adequately account for this level of growth.

For example, the NSW State Government plans to see 5,900 new homes built in the North Sydney LGA alone by 2029. If that growth is replicated across the four LGAs currently contained in the federal seat that would see more than 24,000 new homes built across our community which is untenable. North Sydney Council is also expecting 19,500 new residents to move into the local area by 2036.

As a resident of Waverton I have experienced first-hand the high cost problems that result when local infrastructure can't reasonably meet a local population area's needs. On countless occasions, I have been unable to access train services to the city during morning peak hours because of constant overcrowding on the North Shore trainline. What's the point of promoting people to live near public transport if you can't easily and effectively avail yourself of those public services? Any increased population to the North Sydney will exacerbate existing bottlenecks in an already challenged local public transport system.

Choosing to proceed with abolishing our seat now given the warnings of these existing issues would be completely counterproductive to good government planning. As a local resident I have no doubt failure to heed these warnings will result in a case to re-establish the seat well ahead of the 'expected' 2029 milestone.

3. North Sydney is a cohesive and engaged independent community: North Sydney was one of the first electorates to stand up for independent representation in 2022, and one of the few to vote for an Indigenous Voice to Parliament in the 2023 referendum.

Local residents strongly respect and value our cultural diversity, with half of our population born overseas and a third speaking a language other than English at home. We are also home to numerous active environmental, humanitarian, religious, social and sporting groups, including two of the largest community-based sporting organisations in the state.

Of equal importance, the historical significance of the federal seat of North Sydney is also an integral part of our community's identity. North Sydney is one of the 75 original federation divisions contested in Australia's first federal election 123 years ago.

I strongly oppose the draft proposal that the seat of North Sydney be abolished and request for it to remain, with minimal changes to accommodate changes in overall numbers of electors in NSW.

Your sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Louise M Larrey.

Louise M Larrey