



**THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Objection 707

Alison and Derek Hamill

2 pages

12 July 2024

Attention: The Australian Electoral Committee

Re: Draft proposal to abolish the Federal seat of North Sydney in the proposed 2024 NSW redistribution

Dear Committee Members

Thank you for your time in considering our objection.

My name is Alison Hamill and in writing to the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), I also speak on behalf of my husband Derek Hamill.

As residents of North Willoughby since 1998, we have developed strong connections to the Federal seat of North Sydney.

I worked for a significant period of my career in the charity, non-for-profit and educational sectors in Chatswood, Crows Nest and St Leonards, and Derek has worked in North Sydney in the legal sector.

We also consider ourselves privileged to enjoy the many benefits of everyday living that the area offers: extensive commercial hubs, excellent educational and medical facilities, civic amenities such as parks, libraries and sporting facilities, efficient public transportation, social gathering places and activities, and being able to exercise in the natural beauty of North Sydney's many and varied suburbs.

Whilst we acknowledge the work the AEC has done in putting together the draft proposal, at the same time **we are shocked by the proposal. We feel the "rug of our voting DNA" has been pulled from under our feet and we have little comeback other than to submit this objection to the proposal, to the AEC.**

Similarly, the public response to the proposal from the many residents, business owners and workers, and even visitors in North Sydney whom I - and other supporters of the seat's status quo - have canvassed in recent weeks, ranges from thorough **disappointment to astonished disbelief, to utter disgust** – heightened by the loss of our Independent Member's seat.

As North Sydney's incumbent **"of the people, by the people, for the people" independent Federal Parliamentarian, Kylea Tink** is a shining embodiment of a responsible Member of Parliament: caring, intelligent, consultative, tirelessly hardworking, gracious and humble. At every opportunity Kylea ensures North Sydney's voice - and that of all Australians who care about matters that count - is heard loud. It would be a true travesty to abolish the seat and thereby remove Kylea's passionate and inspirational talent from representing the voice of her North Sydney constituents - and others - in Federal Parliament.

But retaining the electorate of North Sydney is a non-partisan matter. Whatever the political stance of a North Sydney Federal MP, we believe **THE SEAT ITSELF SHOULD BE RETAINED** because of its:

- **historical significance** as an original Federation seat of some 123 years' standing, is part of the fabric of our community.
- **engaged and respectful community connections and diversity - culturally, politically, environmentally, commercially and religiously. We are our own unique community and typically don't necessarily align ourselves with the three seats nominated in the AEC's proposed redistribution. We are also greatly concerned North Sydney's particular needs might not be heard or met if we are "carved up and despatched" to these other electorates.** Despite and perhaps because of that diversity, our community's united actions strive for a better Australia for all Australians, as evidenced in our seat in supporting independent representation in the 2022 election and being one of the few seats nationally to support by majority, an Indigenous Voice to Parliament in 2023.
- **growing population.** Colloquially, you need only look at the number of young families around the neighbourhoods, or skyward to the cranes of new residential construction, (notably along the Pacific Highway commercial and residential hubs of North Sydney, St Leonards, Crows Nest and Chatswood - the latter two especially, with the introduction of Metro train lines), to question the AEC's proposed redistribution based on diminishing population in the electorate. Statistically, by 2029 NSW State Government wants 5,900 new homes to be built in the North Sydney LGA alone, and North Sydney Council is expecting its population to increase by some 19,500 in the next 10 years or so. To us as lay people, it seems the AEC's proposal to abolish the seat could be short-sighted, requiring revision and possibly re-establishment of the seat in coming decade/s.
- **commercial community.** North Sydney is home to some 28,000 small to medium size businesses making it Australia's third largest business and industrial centre. The needs of these businesses are not necessarily the same as those in the other three proposed electorates; as such, to help build business in the seat of North Sydney and Australia overall, they are best served by a local Federal Member in their electorate.

For the above reasons, we strongly oppose the AEC's draft proposal to abolish the seat of North Sydney, and respectfully request the Commission to reconsider and redact the proposal.

Thank you for your time in considering our objection.

With impassioned regards

Alison and Derek Hamill

