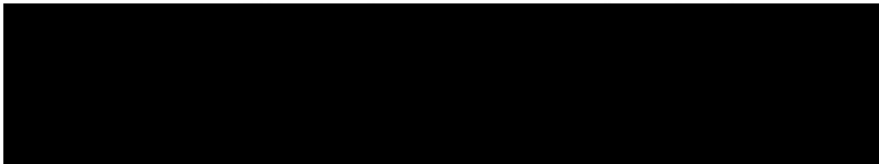




Comment on objections 107

Hon. Philip Dalidakis

3 Pages



v

Attn: Redistribution Secretariat
Locked Bag 4007
CANBERRA ACT 2601

By: [Online Submission](#)

12 July 2024

Dear Secretariat

MACNAMARA SUBMISSION

I am writing to support the proposed Division of Macnamara which clearly demonstrates an understanding of the local communities, the means of travel and communication, the physical features of the inner south of Melbourne and the existing boundaries of state Divisions.

I am acutely aware of the communities and the attributes of each suburb, school, church and synagogue across the division having been the Victorian Legislative Council representative of the Southern Metropolitan region from the State election in November 2014 until leaving State Parliament in June 2019.

Given the proposed abolition of the adjacent seat of Higgins, it is necessary for electors within the existing Division to be transferred to the neighbouring electorates. However, I am of the strong belief that any redistributions should ensure minimal disruption to the electors. I understand that the Electoral Act also requires the Commission to consider this when considering potential boundaries of Divisions.

Additionally, I know that the existing Division of Macnamara is projected to be under the numerical requirements as outlined in the Electoral Act. Therefore, it is essential for the existing Division of Macnamara to gain electors.

I strongly agree with the proposed Division of Macnamara and the proposal to reunite the suburb of Windsor with its former seat of Macnamara, with St Kilda Road as a strong natural boundary to the north. This proposed redistribution would only see 5,251 in the locality of Windsor transfer into Macnamara. As a result, 4,424 projected electors east of St Kilda Road in the existing Division of Macnamara will be transferred to the proposed Division of Melbourne, uniting them with more of the locality of Melbourne. This is an appropriate transfer.



I would like to particularly comment on the submissions by the Liberal Party of Australia [Victorian Division] which proposes an unnecessary and excessive transfer of large amounts of electors from South Yarra, Prahran, Southbank, South Wharf and Fishermans Bend for the same aim of ensuring the division of Macnamara is within the numerical requirements. This is clearly disruptive and unnecessary, when the same outcome can be achieved with the transfer of a much smaller number of electors, as proposed by the Committee.

Additionally, the Australian Greens Victoria propose to transfer electors in the locality of Prahran East into the proposed Division of Macnamara. While I acknowledge that Prahran and Windsor have similar attributes, in my view there are distinct differences in the communities. Those in Prahran East orient towards Malvern Central, Armadale and High Street, into the proposed division of Kooyong. While those in Prahran and Windsor to the west of Williams Street convene around the Chapel Street precinct. Families in Prahran East send their children to Toorak Primary School or Armadale Primary School which is demonstrated by the school catchment zones. Whilst my upper house seat represented all these communities, given I had nearly 500,000 electors, I can assure you I understand the difference in these communities better than most.

There are two additional points I wish to make based off my observations and experiences within the Southern Metropolitan region:

1. Jewish Community

Both the Liberal and the Greens submission refer to the Jewish Community as a community of interest. It is absolutely true that the Jewish community south of Dandenong Road is united and should not be divided.

This is not the case for the community north of Dandenong Road. While the Eruv has been expanded north of Dandenong Road, it is not extending into the areas of Windsor which have been proposed to be transferred into Macnamara.

The Liberals suggested that in a time of rising antisemitism their proposal would add an additional 600 Jewish Australians to the division of Macnamara which has the largest Jewish population in Macnamara. However, if the Commission were to seriously consider this argument and apply it across the divisions, the suburbs of Malvern and Armadale which have significantly more Jewish Australians would need to be transferred to Macnamara. This is entirely inappropriate and ignores clear physical boundaries between the two communities. I also believe this has been rightly rejected by commissions in the past.

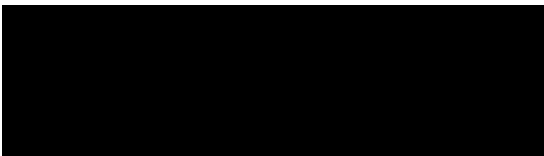
2. Crossing the Yarra

I want to discuss the objections which proposed crossing the Yarra in Southbank would be more preferable than South Yarra. This is entirely incompatible with the communities which reside in

these respective areas. Firstly, the community of South Yarra and Richmond are distinctly similar. Church St and Chapel St unite these communities across the Yarra, and are home to restaurants, bars and community centres. There is also a strong ecosystem of start-ups between the two communities. Many residents of South Yarra travel across into Richmond for their shopping and dining and vice-versa. Additionally, the Liberal Party's proposal that Toorak Road is a boundary demonstrates little understanding of the community. Toorak Road is not a boundary but instead a central part of the community - there is nothing distinguishing residents on either side of Toorak Road. While the residents of South Yarra do not travel east-west into Port Melbourne. Southbank and Fishermans Bend are not extensions of the CBD and those local communities feel more connected with the Southern Metropolitan region than they do the CBD. The suggestion that West Gate Freeway is an appropriate boundary is completely inaccurate as the freeway does not divide the communities and its location has no connection with the suburbs it goes across - residents in Port Melbourne travel on bridges across the Freeway to Fishermans Bend and vice versa. In summary, I agree with the Commission's proposal to cross the Yarra in South Yarra with St Kilda Road as a strong boundary.

I thank you for the opportunity to make a submission and like many praise the difficult work of the AEC in supporting democracy and ensuring the community retains trust in one of the most important public organisations in our country.

Yours Sincerely



Hon. Philip Dalidakis