



Objection 150

Jane Bell

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Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Higgins redistribution objection
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Subject: Objection to the Abolition of the Federal Electoral Seat of Higgins

Dear Australian Electoral Commission,

My name is Jane Bell, and I am writing to express my strong objection to the proposed abolition of the federal electoral seat of Higgins as part of the recent redistribution plans. As a resident of Toorak within the City of Stonnington, I feel compelled to voice my concerns regarding this significant change.

Higgins, a seat steeped in history and community spirit, has long been a bastion of local identity and representation. Named after Justice H.B. Higgins, the electorate has been a crucible of political engagement and civic pride. The proposal to dissolve Higgins and merge it into neighbouring electorates such as Chisholm, Hotham, Kooyong, Macnamara, and Melbourne threatens to dismantle this rich tapestry of communal heritage.

Firstly, the abolition of Higgins would undoubtedly dilute the voice of its residents. The unique needs and aspirations of the Stonnington community could be overshadowed within larger, more disparate electorates. The intricate nuances of our local issues, from the preservation of heritage sites to the support for small businesses along Chapel Street, may be lost in the broader, less tailored representation.

Moreover, the community identity of Higgins is not just a matter of geography but of shared history and values. From the bustling markets of Prahran to the serene parks of Malvern, our electorate is a mosaic of interconnected neighbourhoods, each contributing to the vibrant character of Higgins. Merging these communities into different electorates with potentially divergent priorities would disrupt this cohesion and erode the sense of belonging that residents cherish.

There is also the matter of established political relationships. Over the years, residents of Higgins have built strong connections with our current MP, fostering a sense of trust and mutual understanding. The dissolution of Higgins could sever these ties, leading to potential disruptions in services and advocacy that are finely attuned to our local context.

Electoral confusion is another significant concern. The reallocation of voters into new electorates, unfamiliar polling places, and representatives could lead to a decrease in voter engagement and participation. This confusion might disenfranchise residents, undermining the democratic process that relies on informed and active citizenry.

Lastly, the impact on local projects cannot be overstated. Ongoing initiatives, from community health programmes to infrastructure developments, may lose momentum or be deprioritised under new representatives who may not fully grasp the specific needs of the Higgins community. The continuity and effectiveness of these projects are vital for the well-being and progress of our residents.

In light of these concerns, I earnestly request the Australian Electoral Commission to reconsider the decision to abolish the federal electoral seat of Higgins. Maintaining the current electoral structure is crucial for ensuring that the residents of Higgins continue to receive representation that is both meaningful and reflective of our unique community identity.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Bell
Toorak, Stonnington

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