



# Objection 402

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2 pages

## **Summary**

As someone who has lived in the seat of Chisholm for over 60 years I wanted to make a submission following the proposed redistribution report publicised on May 31 2024.

I do this as a long time Liberal Party supporter.

## **Key points**

Obviously with a seat needing to definitely be abolished this cycle, Higgins has a special place in the Liberal Party's heart and I acknowledge the strain this has put on many loyal Party supporters in Higgins.

The AEC does not and rightly should not take this into account though.

It is obvious there is a small campaign from Liberal Party members and supporters in Higgins, to reverse the abolition of Higgins.

Most if not all of these "submissions" are not genuine, not well informed and of a template nature, diluting and demeaning the consultation process.

The AEC should alternatively genuinely take into consideration the feedback from genuine submitters focused on the positive flow on effects on other electorates, and not just a vocal minority from leafy Malvern and Toorak.

It is a very well known fact that the Liberal Party's candidate for the proposed abolished seat of Higgins has been campaigning to have the Higgins abolition reversed.

Blind Freddy can see that her motivation is not some genuine concern for the Division of Higgins but a desperate gasp to hold on to a (failed!) political career.

Unfortunately no one has had the heart to tell the candidate that her bizarre behaviour not only embarrasses her and the poor misguided people she has pushed into putting in a template submission, but it makes a mockery of the Liberal Party's longstanding policy of one submission from the party organisation that represents the best interests of the party.

Conversely the ALP makes one submission and imposes strict disciplinary requirements around who can make public comment about the proposed boundaries.

Higgins' demographics have changed to the point where it was unlikely the Liberal Party could win it back at the next election anyway so I don't really see what the fuss is about.

The reason why I have spent some time reviewing Higgins is because of the impact its' abolition has on my seat of Chisholm.

In the proposed division of Chisholm, one clear positive change is the joining of Ashburton and Ashwood into the same federal seat. This makes very good demographic sense. It has long been known that Ashburton should be in the City of Monash. We know people live in Ashburton and shop in Ashwood and vice versa. Sporting clubs and schools cater for both communities. Neighbourhood houses offer programs across both localities.

Localities like Camberwell and Glen Iris spent decades in the seat of Chisholm and now will continue to add to the Boroondara section of the proposed Division of Chisholm. The Toorak

Road part of Camberwell shares a clear community of interest with Burwood and Burwood Highway which has been in the current Chisholm for over 20 years.

Similarly, Malvern East used to be called Chadstone and now builds on these historic ties with Chisholm and Hotham.

### **The case against abolition of other seats instead of Higgins**

The AEC report makes clear that arriving at Higgins was a long process and studiously looked at nine other seats for abolition including Chisholm and Hotham.

I am comfortable that the methodology used to arrive at Higgins makes sense.

Substituting Higgins for any other seat at this point will create a new period of uncertainty and require the need for a longer period of consultation by the AEC, all the while trying to meet a deadline set out in law and also to hope not to encroach on the next federal election timeline.

Lastly, I refute completely as complete looney this silly idea that a division should not be abolished because Liberal leaders like Holt and Gorton were the members at some historic point. Surely the AEC has better things to do than give these concepts the light of day.

### **Conclusion**

It is my strong view that the AEC makes no significant changes to the proposed redistribution as set out by the AEC in its report of May 31 and proceeds with the abolition of Higgins.