



Objection 444

Rachel Westaway

2 pages

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 28 June 2024 1:01 PM
To: FedRedistribution - VIC
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Higgins redistribution objection
Categories: [REDACTED]

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Subject: Objection to the Abolition of the Federal Electoral Seat of Higgins

Dear Australian Electoral Commission,

I trust this message finds you well. My name is Rachel Westaway, and I reside at [REDACTED] South Yarra, within the cherished boundaries of the federal electoral seat of Higgins. I am writing to express my profound concern and objection to the proposed abolition of this seat as part of the recent redistribution plan.

Higgins is not just a name on a map; it is a tapestry of rich history, vibrant community spirit, and a unique identity that has been meticulously woven over decades. The proposal to merge Higgins into neighbouring electorates such as Chisholm, Hotham, Kooyong, Macnamara, and Melbourne threatens to unravel this intricate fabric, leaving its residents adrift in a sea of unfamiliarity and diminished representation.

The residents of Stonnington, including myself, have long enjoyed a tailored representation that understands and addresses our local needs. The abolition of Higgins would dilute our voice in federal politics, rendering us mere whispers in the cacophony of larger, amalgamated electorates. Our concerns and aspirations would be at risk of being overshadowed by the broader priorities of these new, larger constituencies.

Higgins is a seat steeped in history, named after Justice H.B. Higgins, a prominent figure in Australia's legal and political landscape. Our community identity is deeply intertwined with this heritage, and the proposed changes would disrupt the continuity that has been a cornerstone of our collective experience. The unique needs and priorities of Higgins residents, honed over years of dedicated representation, would be lost in the shuffle of electoral boundaries.

Moreover, the established relationships between Higgins residents and our current Member of Parliament are invaluable. These relationships facilitate effective advocacy and service delivery, ensuring that our voices are heard and our needs are met. The proposed redistribution would sever these ties, leading to potential disruptions in services and a loss of the advocacy we have come to rely on.

Electoral confusion is another significant concern. Voters would be faced with the daunting task of navigating new electorates, polling places, and representatives. This confusion could lead to decreased voter engagement and participation, undermining the democratic process that is the bedrock of our society.

Finally, the impact on local projects cannot be overstated. Higgins is home to numerous ongoing initiatives that address the specific needs of our community. These projects, which have been carefully nurtured under the current representation, may lose momentum or be deprioritised under new representatives unfamiliar with our unique context.

In light of these concerns, I earnestly request that the AEC reconsider the decision to abolish the federal electoral seat of Higgins. Maintaining the current electoral structure is crucial for preserving the voice, identity, and well-being of Higgins residents. Our community deserves representation that understands and prioritises our unique needs, and this can only be achieved by retaining the seat of Higgins.

Thank you for considering my objection. I trust that the AEC will make a decision that reflects the best interests of the Higgins community.

Yours sincerely,

Rachel Westaway

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