



Objection 471

Australian Vietnamese Women's Association

2 pages

28 June 2024

Letter of Support re. redistribution of Victorian electoral boundaries

I, Bich-Cam Nguyen OAM, President of the Australian Vietnamese Women's Association, am writing in support of the AEC's proposed redistribution of Victorian electoral boundaries, connecting areas of South Yarra into the federal electorate of Melbourne.

I am a proud member of Melbourne's Vietnamese community, and founded the AVWA 41 years ago, previously acting as the organisation's CEO. I set up the organisation soon after arriving in Australia, with the aim of assisting newly-arrived Vietnamese refugees, many of whom had experienced significant trauma before arriving in Australia. I understand the needs of the Vietnamese community in Melbourne well, particularly those living in public housing.

The AVWA is located in Richmond and assists the Vietnamese community in the following ways (but not limited to):

- Running playgroups with a bilingual program to address educational disadvantages;
- Case management and service coordination for the elderly in using their Home Care Packages;
- NDIS support;
- Supporting Indochinese prisoners and their families;
- Counselling for those experiencing gambling and drug and alcohol addiction;
- Running a family violence prevention program;
- Being a registered training organisation; and
- Providing social support and engagement to elderly Vietnamese Victorians or to those living with a disability.

With a large Vietnamese community in Richmond and in the public housing towers, many of whom are on low-incomes and face significant social barriers including English as an additional language, these services are essential.

The 2021 ABS Census stated that 2.25% of the Victorian population were of Vietnamese ancestry. Analysis shows that there is high representation of our Vietnamese community in the public housing towers across the city of Melbourne, including South Yarra: the statistical area that covers the towers at 1 Surrey Road, 2 Simmons Street & 259 Malvern Road records 7.76% Vietnamese ancestry. This higher than average representation is evident across the public housing tower locations in the existing suburbs of the Melbourne electorate - Carlton 12.8%, Collingwood 16.93%, Fitzroy 19.6% & Richmond 41.28%.

The inclusion of these neighbourhoods and the constituents that reside within them brings together a large majority of the community of Vietnamese people living in public housing, across the city of Melbourne. It is also the place we meet for celebrations and cultural events, and also to access health & support services specifically for Vietnamese people.

Every year, the Vietnamese community comes together to celebrate the Lunar New Year. The Lunar New Year festival is always a spectacular display of dance, music and food and it shows off the bustling energy and activity of Victoria Street in Richmond, as well as an inspiring display of Vietnamese culture. Vietnamese people from surrounding suburbs gather together in Richmond to celebrate this important occasion. These events are attended by Vietnamese residents across the city, including South Yarra.

Importantly, many services which specifically support the health and wellbeing of our Vietnamese community are located within the electorate of Melbourne.

In the interest of connecting significant communities and cultural groups, I believe it is important for the community of Vietnamese people living in public housing across inner city Melbourne to be brought together into one electorate. Having a single member representing us allows the MP to deeply understand the issues and the experience of our community, and advocate strongly on our behalf. With this in mind, I am in full support of the proposed redistribution to bring South Yarra into the federal electorate of Melbourne.

Kind Regards,



Bich-Cam Nguyen OAM