



# Suggestion 50

Henry Rees

5 pages

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The Redistribution Committee for Victoria

6A/706 Lorimer St

Port Melbourne VIC 3207

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing concerning the redistribution of federal electorates in Victoria in which the number of such divisions will be reduced from 39 to 38.

First, I will briefly address the question of where the division should be abolished, providing a summary for those who do not wish to view the full four pages. In recognition of the difficulty of your job and the limits of my own capacity, I will not then present a suggestion for all 38 divisions. Rather, I will focus on the names and boundaries of the divisions of Jagajaga, Menzies, McEwen, Deakin, Chisholm, Hotham, Higgins, Macnamara, Melbourne, Goldstein and Isaacs. I have lived in Jagajaga for 20 years, as well as frequenting Menzies, McEwen and surrounding divisions throughout that time as a result of family connections, sporting commitments, and community work.

#### **East or West? (Summary)**

It is my understanding that divisions south and east of the Yarra River, as well as divisions north and west of the Yarra, are both, in total, approximately 0.5 divisions above quota. This balance makes the question of where to abolish a seat a difficult one, as well as meaning that the Yarra will likely need to be crossed by at least one division.

I strongly recommend that the Committee abolish a seat to the east of the Yarra, rather than the West. Despite there being numerous Western divisions that are below quota, there are numerous reasons as to why they should be retained.

**Wills** and **Cooper** have **strong** community and infrastructure links within their electorates, as well as lying within the boundaries of both the Merri-Bek and Darebin LGAs and creeks. Furthermore, seats such as **Calwell**, **Maribyrnong**, **Hawke** and **Scullin** are situated in major growth areas of Melbourne. I note that it was for this reason that Hawke was created in the 2021 redistribution, and although the pandemic upended these trends, such population growth will undoubtedly continue. Finally, not only is **McEwen** named after a former Prime Minister and draws together similarly growing communities but is also an extremely useful seat that bridges the suburban-regional gap and can be used to reconcile differences between metropolitan and regional population going forward. It is for the same reason that seats such as Casey and Monash should not be abolished (barring major changes in population), as it will inevitably result in rural areas being placed in the same divisions as Melbourne's suburbs.

I believe that the redistribution should essentially amalgamate **Hotham** and **Chisholm**, while retaining Chisholm as the division's name. This is due to Chisholm's persistently low population growth, as well as it and Hotham's lack of clear geographic grounding. These divisions are also bordered by several similarly slow growing, vastly under quota divisions, giving further credence to abolishing a seat East of the Yarra. I will therefore now address each of the electorates in terms of how I believe their boundaries should be altered, with electorates north of Chisholm and Hotham generally moving south, electorates west of Chisholm and Hotham moving east, with Jagajaga and Melbourne crossing the Yarra.

## **Jagajaga and McEwen**

I believe that Jagajaga should and must cross the Yarra River, just as Menzies briefly crossed the river from 2018-2021. As someone who lives in the community, the suburbs of Templestowe and Templestowe Lower in Menzies are much more like Eltham and Research in Jagajaga, than they are Doncaster and Doncaster East in their own electorate. This is both in terms of community interests, population demographics, housing concentration and distribution, and environmental qualities. The Yarra unites these suburbs rather than dividing them. Further, Jagajaga must move clockwise as divisions shift to take in electorates from the abolished seat.

I therefore recommend that Jagajaga gain the suburbs of Templestowe and Templestowe Lower north of Foote St/Reynolds Rd. This allows McEwen to move further into the north of Jagajaga, continuing the trend that began with Diamond Creek moving into the division in 2021.

## **Menzies and Deakin**

Menzies, by virtue of its proximity to the Yarra and its shifting centre of gravity south, should undergo significant change. Due to it being directly north of the Chisholm/Hotham abolition, as well as communities generally operating in a north-south direction rather than east-west, Menzies should be reoriented as a north-south seat. As Menzies moves south over time, this renders Templestowe further ill-suited to the electorate, due to its many differences to Box Hill and Blackburn.

It was noted in the 2021 reports of the augmented redistribution committee that many suggestions and comments believed the division's southern border of Whitehorse Rd unnecessarily divided shopping precincts in Box Hill and Blackburn. With the Chisholm/Hotham abolition, Menzies should then move further south, gaining the remainder of Box Hill and Blackburn, with the Burwood Fwy as its southern boundary. Another frequent suggestion from the last redistribution was the moving of the Menzies/Deakin border to Springvale Rd, which should also be taken up in the absence of Chisholm (with its name being used as the title of what was mostly previously Hotham). Menzies would therefore retain Station St as its eastern border south of Koonung Creek, but deviate to follow Gardiners Creek at its intersection, so as to include Deakin University.

In Menzies' northeast, Warranwood was lost to Deakin in the 2021 redistribution. This reflected the shifting community interests and identities and should be expanded to include, Park Orchards and Donvale east of Mullum Mullum Creek moving to Deakin, as well as Warrandyte, North Warrandyte and Wonga Park. These areas are simply more suited to Croydon and Ringwood than they are to Doncaster and Box Hill. The Menzies/Deakin border would then run down the creek to Whitehorse Rd, and then West to Springvale Rd. **Deakin** therefore remains largely unchanged aside from the mentioned gains and slight losses.

**Such changes would increase both Menzies' and Deakin's enrolment from approx. 112,000 to approx. 120,000**

## **Chisholm and Hotham**

To clarify, I recommend that the name Chisholm be retained, but the electorate straddle the currently existing divisions of Chisholm of Hotham. I have attached a map of the proposed Division in comparison to Menzies and Deakin on the back page to clarify. It is logical that Chisholm largely sit in the east of the existing divisions due to the hard water and LGA borders to its east, and the ground that surrounding electorates must take in the east and south.

The new Chisholm's northern boundary would run along the Burwood Fwy, and then south along the Dandenong Creek in its east, before continuing south down the EastLink until the intersection with Heatherton Rd. The southern border would therefore run along Heatherton Rd and then the Dingley Bypass, retaining part of the existing southern boundary of Hotham, before merging into a western border of Clarinda Rd/Huntingdale Rd.

As previously mentioned, both Chisholm and Hotham lack clear geographic grounding, and even in this scenario, it is very difficult to avoid crossing both the Monash and Princes Freeways.

**Such changes would result in Chisholm's enrolment being approx. 125,000, as opposed to current enrolments of approx. 102,000 and 104,000 for Chisholm and Hotham respectively.**

### **Higgins, Macnamara and Melbourne**

Further justification for the abolition of one of Chisholm or Hotham is the need of surrounding divisions to gain voters, and no division needs to gain voters like Higgins does, as it is vastly under quota.

In this scenario, Higgins is able to gain Hughesdale, Oakleigh, Chadstone and Ashwood east to Huntingdale Rd, while shedding its most inner city portions of South Yarra and Prahran west of Chapel St to **Macnamara**. Macnamara shifting east would necessitate **Melbourne** crossing the Yarra in the CBD to take in Southbank. The Yarra undoubtedly does not lead to any discernible difference in community identity in the CBD and possesses countless businesses who draw in the bulk of their customers from north of the Yarra, which makes Southbank being in the same electorate as the rest of the CBD a more logical setup anyway. This change is crucial as Melbourne's southward shift then allows under quota northern and western inner city seats such as Cooper, Wills and Maribyrnong to move into Melbourne's north, which by extension, allows Hawke, Scullin, McEwen to drift south and reconcile their current enrolment disparities. When population growth in these areas inevitably continues, these boundaries will be much easier to correct, than if another seat must be created in the scenario that a western seat is abolished.

In regard to Higgins, I also propose that Ormond and Carnegie east of Koornang Rd be moved into Goldstein, as Goldstein is also under quota, and already possesses part of Ormond.

This therefore retains Higgins' Monash Fwy/Toorak Rd northern border with Kooyong, as Higgins must gain voters without impacting Kooyong to the point of rendering it below quota.

### **Goldstein and Isaacs**

As previously mentioned, Goldstein should take in Ormond and Carnegie to the east of Koornang Rd, as well as Ormond, McKinnon, Bentleigh and Bentleigh East to the east between Warrigal Rd, North Rd and South Rd.

Isaacs would then move north into the remainder of what is currently Hotham in Springvale South, Noble Park and Keysborough, between Stall Rd in the west, Heatherton Rd in the north, EastLink in the east and Cheltenham Rd in the south. Again, this importantly allows Dunkley to move north into the south of Isaacs to reconcile its under quota status.

I hope this is of assistance and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Yours sincerely,

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Henry Rees



