

27/06/2007

Mr Phillip Green
ACT Electoral Commissioner

ACT Electoral Commission
Level 2, 12 Moore Street
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Objection to proposed electoral redistribution 2007

Dear Sir,

I wish to lodge a formal objection against the proposed electoral redistribution 2007.

The basis of my objection is outlined in the following points:

1. Objection to moving Farrer from Molonglo to Brindabella Electorate:

The Redistribution Committee is highly inconsistent with its own previous recommendations and redistribution decisions that have specifically avoided and precluded the creation of electoral boundaries that are disruptive to communities of interest as referred to by 36(c)(i) and the boundaries of Divisions as referred by 36(c)(v) of the Act¹.

In the proposed distribution the Redistribution Committee 2007 has freely admitted:

"In particular, the Committee notes that the new electorate boundary constituted by Beasley Street, being the border between Farrer and Mawson, is less than ideal. Along this boundary, there are nearly 40 dwellings on the Farrer side of Beasley Street that face that street and around 70 dwellings on the Mawson side of Beasley Street. Past Redistribution Committees have avoided the need to place electorate boundaries along residential streets such as Beasley Street by using major arterial roads and natural corridors as boundaries."

¹ Unless otherwise explicitly specified references to the word Act are deemed to mean the ACT Electoral Act 1992 (1992-71)

My position against the redistribution is further supported by the fact that whilst the number of electors, within the current electoral boundaries will meet the quota criteria as defined in 36(a) and 36(b) of the Act, and will continue to meet this criteria with the revised forecasts, revised data and subsequent projection calculations, there is no substantive basis for the division (suburb) of Farrer to be moved in to the electorate of Brindabella.

2. Objection to moving Palmerston from Molonglo to Ginninderra Electorate:

I argue that that whilst the number of electors, within the current electoral boundaries will meet the quota criteria as defined in 36(a) and 36(b) of the Act, and will continue to meet this criteria with the revised forecasts, revised data and subsequent projection calculations, there is no basis for the division (suburb) of Palmerston to be moved through redistribution in to the electorate of Ginninderra.

It could further be argued that by redistributing Palmerston to the electorate of Ginninderra this would further disenfranchise the community of interest known as the "Gungahlin District". This will occur through the isolation of the Divisions (suburbs) of Nicholls and Palmerston in to a separate electorate from the rest of Gungahlin.

Unfortunately on this point I note that previous Redistribution Committees have only considered this matter in accordance with 36(c)(v) that specifically makes reference to Divisions, not Districts.

3. Objection to speculation of anticipated elector numbers by the Redistribution Committee at the time of the next election.

The figures used by the Redistribution Committee should be considered authoritative based on the best available information and sources at the time.

Any reasonable person interpreting the Act could not be easily lead to believe that there is specific latitude for the Redistribution Committee to be able to "speculate" what may or may not occur outside of the figures they present for the purpose of calculating quotas.

I reject the assertion that *"the Committee considered that it is necessary to leave a margin for error to allow for the possibility that the enrolment projections may not accurately forecast the*

actual enrolment relativities of the three electorates at the time of the next election”.

Simply stated this is a black and white issue – either the figures are either correct or they are not. If they are incorrect then the basis for any analysis of a redistribution is fundamentally flawed.

To summarise my position in regard to the proposed redistribution as it current stands: I object for the need for there to be any variation to existing electoral boundaries on the basis that with the evidence as provided by the Redistribution Committee, in accordance with the provisions of the relevant Acts, all the electorates will be still within acceptable quota levels, without the need for change at the next election.

I trust that these objections are given serious consideration and acted upon in an appropriate manner.

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several diagonal strokes and a horizontal flourish at the end.

Jonathon Reynolds