



The Redistribution Committee
Po Box 272
Civic Square ACT 2608

Dear Mr Green and colleagues

The Liberal Party of Australia – ACT Division submits that the Redistribution Committee should make no change to the boundaries of the existing ACT electorates on this occasion. We base our recommendation on the following reasons.

1. The population projections provided by the Commission forecast that if the ACT electoral boundaries remain unchanged, then existing constituencies will remain ***comfortably within the statutory tolerance*** for ACT electorate sizes.
2. This present redistribution process has commenced later than normal in the parliamentary term, due to the inquiry by the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs into “The Appropriateness of the Size of the Legislative Assembly”. As a result, the current population projections have been produced little more than a year out from the next election. It is highly improbable that the population projections could be very inaccurate when ***forecasting such a short time period ahead***.
3. In none of the electorates will the forecast variance from quota be verging close to the limit of the allowable variance. In these circumstances, it is more important to satisfy the ***public desire for continuity of boundaries***, than to eliminate all variance as far as it is possible. In previous redistributions, parties of all political colours have submitted to this Committee that the Canberra public is seeking consistency and certainty in boundary positioning. By avoiding disruptive and confusing changes in the past, the Commission has both enhanced the integrity of the current electoral system and provided continuity of linkage between citizens and their respective MLAs. It should be remembered that one of the reasons Canberrans voted for the Hare Clark system in 1992 was the argument in the official referendum booklet that this system would mean that “boundaries will seldom change.”
4. It would be ***rash to move suburbs based on speculative assumptions*** about longer-term population trends that might occur after 2004. For instance, assumptions about the longer-term growth in Gungahlin may be vitiated if apparent proposals by the Territory Government to allocate some of the ACT’s greenfields residential development to Stromlo proceed (a proposition reported as under their consideration).
5. The present configuration of ACT electorates is one that avoids sub-division within the existing town-centres, so far as it is possible (with only four suburbs separated from their closest town-centres). If a suburb or two were redistributed prior to 2004 just to minimise variance from quota, then such changes would inevitably:
 - further divide existing ***community of interests***;
 - cut across the dominant physical features of the landscape (including ridgelines and valleys); and
 - sub-divide zones of travel and communication within the current electorates.

For these compelling reasons, we submit there is insufficient imperative to make any boundary adjustment this year.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D Clode', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Daniel Clode
ACT Director