



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY BRANCH

Redistribution Committee
Elections ACT
redistribution@act.gov.au

Thursday 18 December 2014

Dear Redistribution Committee Members,

We are pleased to be able to provide some brief comments on the submissions that have been made to the Redistribution Committee.

There has clearly been a high level of interest in the redistribution process and we were happy to see such a large number of well thought out proposals submitted.

We note that a substantial number of the submissions made that attempt to draw boundaries according to the guidelines provided by the Redistribution Committee are very close to the boundaries that we proposed in our submission.

We believe that:

1. There appears to be a broad consensus that the five electorates be centred on the most prominent town centres of Tuggeranong, Woden, Canberra City, Belconnen and Gungahlin.
2. There appears to be a broad consensus that Kambah should be included in a new electorate that incorporates suburbs from the Woden, Weston Creek and Molonglo districts.
3. There appears to be a broad consensus that the suburbs from the 'Inner North' and 'Inner South' districts be incorporated into an electorate in their own right.
4. The issue that is still outstanding for the Redistribution Committee to determine is where to draw the boundaries for the new Gungahlin and Belconnen centred electorates.

The issue raised in point '4' that needs to be considered is whether to move the suburb of Bruce or the suburb of Evatt into a new Gungahlin centred electorate.

It is the view of ACT Labor that Bruce should remain in a Belconnen centred electorate. The University of Canberra campus is located in the suburb of Bruce and it is a historic and important landmark of the Belconnen community.

Considering the proximity of the University of Canberra to the Belconnen town centre, we believe that students who move to study at the university relate more closely with Belconnen than Gungahlin and that it is in their best interest, from an enfranchisement point of view, that the electorate they enrol into is the electorate within which they have the most interaction.

Whilst the same could be argued for the suburb of Evatt, we believe that there is enough of a relationship between Evatt, Kaleen, Giralang, Mackellar and Lawson to ensure that good representation can be maintained even if located in an electorate with a different town centre.

In an ideal world, the suburbs of Evatt, Kaleen, Giralang, Mackellar and Lawson would stay within a Belconnen based electorate, and if the population of Gungahlin expands, in time this might be able to occur. However, in order for the Redistribution Committee to be able to draft boundaries that fit within the guidelines, we believe that they are best suited to move over.

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We hope that the comments we have made help the Redistribution Committee in your consideration of draft boundaries.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Byrne".

Matthew Byrne
Secretary, ACT Labor

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