



The Liberal Party of Australia
A.C.T. DIVISION

13 March 2000

Mr Phillip Green
Electoral Commissioner
Elections ACT
P O Box 272
CIVIC SQUARE ACT 2608

Dear Mr Green

REDISTRIBUTION OF ACT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

The Liberal Party firmly believes that in order to minimise public confusion and to maintain continuity it is important that changes to the electoral boundaries be kept to a minimum.

Undertaking a major change, such as altering the size of Ginninderra to seven members and Molonglo to five members, is simply an administrative and bureaucratic exercise with no evident public benefit.

Such a proposal would involve moving about 20,000 electors with subsequent confusion at election time which would not be mitigated by any public information programme undertaken by the Commission.

Canberra residents have grown accustomed to the current boundaries having Brindabella and Ginninderra as five members electorates and Molonglo as a seven member electorate since 1995 (redistribution occurring in 1993).

This gives continuity with representation and helps build a relationship between the electors and the elected representatives. This is particularly important when MLAs are not provided with Electorate Offices as is the case in the ACT.

The Party believes that to keep change to a minimum Brindabella electorate should maintain its present boundaries and quota of five MLAs. Its projected variation from quota of 0.91 per cent by October 2001 is well within the maximum requirement of 5 per cent.

In Molonglo and Ginninderra the simplest solution would be to take Nicholls from Molonglo and place it in Ginninderra.

This would leave Ginninderra 2.2 per cent below quota and Molonglo 2.23 above quota by October 2001. Both well within the 5 per cent margin and giving room for possible error in the population projections.

Any other proposal would cause unnecessary transfer of suburbs back and forth between the two electorates.

The ACT Electoral Act requires that there be a community of interest within any proposed electorate and we must assume that this provision applies to the present boundaries.

Our proposal to place Nicholls in Ginninderra would continue with this ideal as Nicholls has substantial community of interest and transport links with Belconnen.

- Belconnen is the closest town centre to Nicholls and is where more Nicholls residents would do their shopping than any other place. Many Nicholls residents would also work in Belconnen.
- Nicholls is also within the priority enrolment for both Copland and Lake Ginninderra Colleges which are located in Belconnen.
- Transport is also important with two bus routes between Belconnen and Nicholls providing regular services during the week and two routes on the weekend.

The village of Hall which is located close to Nicholls is already in the Ginninderra electorate and we believe that both areas would have a joint interest in future planning for that part of Gungahlin.

The other alternates of moving O'Connor or Lyneham into Ginninderra would not pass the community of interest test because these suburbs are oriented for employment, recreation, entertainment and education toward Downer, Dickson and the Civic areas which are all located in Molonglo.

We believe our proposal provides the least disruptive but equitable solution to the redistribution.

Yours sincerely

John RYAN
GENERAL SECRETARY