

From: Neil Parsons
Sent: Friday, 5 August 2011 11:35 AM
To: Elections
Subject: Submission re Electoral Redistribution
Attachments: Submission re Electoral Redistribution from Neil Parsons.pdf

Dear Mr Green,
Please accept my attached submission concerning the proposal to redistribute the ACT electorates.
Yours sincerely
Neil Parsons

Mr Phillip Green
ACT Electoral Commissioner,
ACT Electoral Commission
P O Box 272
Civic Square ACT 2601

3 August 2011

Dear Mr Green,

RE: Redistribution of the ACT Electorates

I am a resident of Turner and have recently become aware of the ACT Electoral Commission's Proposed Redistribution of the ACT's electorates. I would like object to the radical extent of the proposed electoral redistribution and support the Redistribution Committee's original proposal for the retention of a seven member Molonglo seat through the transfer of Crace and Palmerston into the seat of Ginninderra. This would be a better outcome for the ACT as a whole as it would group voters with similar concerns and interests and who live near each other to be in the same electorates without the major and unprecedented rearrangement currently proposed.

The reasons in support of this position are set out below using the Commission guidelines that must be considered in electoral distributions.

Guideline (i) specifies the need for due consideration for the community of interests within each proposed electorate including economic, social and regional interests.

Turner, Lyneham and O'Connor share a very similar history and interests with the other inner north and inner south suburbs, most of which were built and developed between the 1920s and the 1960s. They face the same infrastructure and redevelopment issues, have similar demographics and have a focus on the Civic Centre. In contrast Belconnen and Gungahlin suburbs are much newer with more recently built infrastructure, younger people and families and which are focussed on their respective town centres.

A particularly important and shared challenge facing the suburbs on both sides of Northbourne Avenue is the increased building density that will occur in the next decade or two. This is leading to fundamental change in these communities and this is an important interest that should not be divided down the middle.

Guideline (ii) requires due consideration of the means of communication and travel within each proposed electorate.

The argument that Northbourne Avenue is a significant divider between them is just not true – it is just a road. On the other hand the closest point

between Turner and any part of Belconnen and Gungahlin is over 2.5 kilometres! The inner north suburbs are within walking or cycling distance of Civic and Dickson and these are the centres that the inner north residents predominately use. The same is true of the recreational, educational and sporting facilities with residents predominately using those that are within the inner north.

Guideline (iii) requires due consideration of the physical features and area of each proposed electorate.

Turner, O'Connor and Lyneham along with the other inner north suburbs are located in the plain that is surrounded by Mount Ainslie and Mount Majura in the east and Black Mountain and O'Connor Ridge to the west. This is a natural physical grouping of suburbs which would ideally be kept together. An example of the close physical link between the Turner and Braddon is Haig Park which transverses across both suburbs. Last year the ACT Government held a joint community consultation between the two suburbs to discuss the proposed Master Plan for the park.

The ACT Government is pursuing a policy of increased population density in the inner north and these suburbs are facing large and rapid demographic and infrastructure change. The voters in this area deserve a coherent and unified voice in the Assembly representing their interests during this period of proposed significant change. The proposed division of the inner north into two different electorates, in both of which they will represent a minor part, will significantly reduce the proper representation they will receive and are entitled to. The interests that Turner, Lyneham and O'Connor have in common with the other inner north suburbs will be swamped by the very different Belconnen and Gungahlin concerns. The other inner north suburbs will also suffer as these common interests will have much less impact on the Molonglo representatives in the Legislative Assembly. I urge the Commission to adopt the Redistributions Committee's original and very sensible proposal which results in the Molonglo electorate staying as the 7 seat electorate and which allows the inner north to be properly represented.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Neil Parsons', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Neil Parsons