

# The Greens NSW Submission on the 2020 Electoral Boundary Redistribution - Proposed names and boundaries

The Greens NSW appreciate the opportunity to make a submission on the draft names and boundaries being proposed by the NSW Electoral commission.

Our position in relation to the current boundary redistribution was outlined in detail in [our initial submission](#) and [subsequent comments](#).

Overall, we are supportive of the proposed boundaries and so have limited our contribution to a few key points and detailed comments on some specific areas:

- a) Naming of electoral districts
- b) Overall Redistribution
- c) Ballina
- d) Newtown
- e) Lakemba
- f) Illawarra Region
- g) The township of Gloucester

## Detailed comments

### a) Naming of electoral districts

We note that there are a number of name changes proposed as part of the boundary redistribution, and reiterate our original submission that expressed strong support for the Redistribution Panel to consult with and take guidance on naming from Aboriginal elders and land councils in relation to the naming of electoral districts.

### b) Overall Redistribution

We note with concern the following paragraph from the Report of Reasons for the Draft Boundaries:

*“It soon became apparent to the Redistribution Panel that a rigid attempt to achieve equal elector numbers among districts would have necessitated a wholesale redrawing of almost all electoral district boundaries across the State. That course also would have resulted in a significant increase in the size of some rural electoral districts.”*

While we recognise the significant impact that this wholesale redrawing of the electoral districts would have, we wish to note that the need to maintain and respect the principle of 'one vote, one value' must always be given a priority within our democracy.

Further, we submit that the proposed boundaries for New South Wales run the risk of triggering section 28A of the Constitution due to the malapportionment of districts due to the lack of adjustment to the rural electorates within NSW. We note that the current proposed boundaries have districts from 7% below to 4% above the average if the enrollment projections are current.

We note that in contrast in the 2013 Redistribution which also occurred under similar +/- 10% provisions the commissioners at the time said

*"The Commissioners have taken the strong view, as reflected in the legislation, that the principle of "one vote, one value" is paramount in the establishment of revised electoral boundaries in 2013 but, more importantly, at the time of the next two elections in 2015 and 2019."*

We submit that the commissioners should return to the view as expressed in the 2013 report. Alternatively, we would strongly support the Redistribution Panel making recommendations to the Premier and NSW Parliament to make the necessary adjustments that would enable the conflict between maintaining regional seats of a reasonable size and respecting the principle of 'one vote, one value'. Our position on possible remedies were expressed in our original submission, including but not limited to consideration of multi-member electorates or expanding the number of seats in the NSW Parliament.

#### c) Ballina

We do not have any significant concerns with the minimal changes proposed to the Ballina electoral district.

#### d) Newtown

We are supportive of the current draft boundary for this electoral district as it relates to the new Inner City High School and Prince Alfred Park. We submit that this should remain within the final boundary. This park and the school have close geographical connections with the suburbs and communities of Redfern and Chippendale, both of which are also included in the school's catchment.

While we recognise the necessities in relation to population changes that would see Surry Hills return to the electoral district of Sydney, we wish to note that there is a strong connection and community of interest between the public housing communities in Surry Hills, around Northcott, and those in similar high-rise and high density public

housing in Redfern. The current draft boundary will result in these two communities of interest now being separated across two electoral districts.

We note that the Commission has chosen to act on submissions made to reconnect the Waterloo public housing community into one electoral district. We submit that this should be maintained in the final draft boundary either by bringing the whole of this estate into the electoral district of Newtown or maintaining it in Heffron as it is in the current draft boundary.

We also note that the Commission has followed the main roads of Mitchell Rd and Sydney Park Rd when incorporating the entirety of the suburb of Erskineville into the electoral district of Newtown. If Erskineville is to be included in the final boundary for the Newtown electoral district, we support the boundary following the main roads.

Finally, we would like to request the commission revisit its proposal around the inclusion of Lewisham in the electoral district of Newtown. The suburb of Lewisham has more in common with the neighbouring suburbs in the seat of Summer Hill compared with those around Newtown. From a community of interest perspective, we submit that Lewisham is more suited to be in the electoral district of Summer Hill. We also note with concern that the enrollment projections for Dulwich Hill/Lewisham are significant due to the amount of large scale development that is occurring in the Lewisham area. Under the current draft boundary it is proposed that both Lewisham and Erskineville will be brought into the electoral district of Newtown. We submit that it is quite problematic to have two high growth areas added to the Newtown District that being the Erskineville/Alexandria and the Lewisham areas and as such, and given the community of interest points above, we would suggest Lewisham be included in the electoral district of Summer Hill.

If this would require additional voters, then we reiterate our original suggestion for the inclusion of an additional section of Marrickville along the Addison Rd boundary to be included in the electoral district of Newtown. This would have the additional benefit of not creating an even more elongated electorate.

#### e) Lakemba

We would like to note with concern the proposed loss of the seat of Lakemba as we feel this is an issue that will likely have an impact on the communities who identify and connect with this area. This seat has been around for almost 100 years in one shape or form and therefore we would request commission to consider if there are alternatives that would ensure the continuation of this seat.

#### f) Illawarra Region

The suggested new boundaries between the electorates of Keira and Wollongong are a significant departure from the previous boundaries. While it is understood that both electorates need to move south due to the changes in Heathcote, we submit that it would be more logical for Keira to retain the suburbs of Corrimal East, Towradgi and the eastern part of Fairy Meadow. On a map, it could appear to make sense to use the Princes Highway as a boundary, in reality, the postcodes of 2517, 2518 and 2519 are a cohesive community. The eastern and western ends of these postcodes all share high school catchments, train stations, shopping centres, libraries, community events and share a definite sense of community.

Wollongong and North Wollongong, are a similarly cohesive community and should remain in the electorate of Wollongong. Our suggestion would be that the suburb boundary between Fairy Meadow and North Wollongong form the boundary between Keira and Wollongong. This would mean that part or all of Kembla Grange and surrounds would move back into the electorate of Wollongong.

#### g) Township of Gloucester

We submit that the township of Gloucester shares more of a community of interest with the electoral district of Myall Lakes, than it does with that of the Hunter region. The township of Gloucester is on the opposite side of the range compared to the rest of the electorate of Upper Hunter. Therefore, we submit that the border between these two electoral districts should be the council boundaries between MidCoast and Dungog, also MidCoast and Upper Hunter Council. This would mean that Gloucester is moved into the electoral district of Myall Lakes which more correctly reflects the fact that Gloucester is in the Mid-North Coast region not in the Upper Hunter region.