



PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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**SUBMISSION - NSW Electoral Commission  
2020 Electoral Boundaries Redistribution  
Comments from Greg Piper MLA Lake Macquarie**

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on suggestions relating to the Lake Macquarie electorate that have been submitted for consideration as part of the 2020 NSW Electoral Boundaries Redistribution.

Unlike previous redistribution periods, I did not make a submission to change the existing boundaries because I'm of the view that the 2013 redistribution was, and remains, appropriate. By and large, I believe this view is shared by my constituency and the major parties.

I also note that figures provided by the NSW Electoral Commission reflect little or no need for change. According to those figures, the projected increase to the number of voters in the Lake Macquarie electorate in coming years is still within the desired range and within existing guidelines of the Act, reaffirming my belief that wholesale changes are both unwarranted and undesired.

The existing boundaries of the electorate also align comfortably within the Lake Macquarie LGA so 'communities of interest' stay together, unlike previous years when the electorate included rural areas in the north-west of the Central Coast which are disconnected from Lake Macquarie both geographically and in terms of identity and the needs of those communities.

It is also my view that as the population of this electorate grows, it makes obvious sense that any changes to boundaries are worked from the existing perimeters inwards, rather than outwards to take in new suburbs.

I note that there has been no submission which drastically changes the existing boundaries, but I wish to make a brief comment on some of those suggestions. They include:

### **Australian Labor Party (NSW Branch)**

I note that the Labor Party has suggested moving the suburb of Argenton out of Lake Macquarie and into the Cessnock electorate, as well as suggesting that the suburb of Lakelands be moved into the Charlestown electorate.

It is my view that the status quo remain because the numbers in Lake Macquarie, both now and in 2023, still comply with the Act and allowable quota. I see no reason to shuffle those 3000 people into other electorates unnecessarily.

If the Commission is of the mind to accept Labor's position, it would make more sense to leave Argenton and Lakelands in Lake Macquarie, but return the boundary to Macquarie Road where it originally was, and move approximately 2200 constituents back into the Charlestown electorate.

Having said that, it remains my view that the status quo be retained, firstly because it still complies with the regulations, and secondly because it doesn't require the 5000 people in Argenton, Lakelands and Cardiff South to be unnecessarily moved around again and left confused about what electorate they're actually in.

### **Liberal Party of Australia – NSW Division**

It should be noted that the Liberal Party makes no suggested changes to the existing boundaries of the Lake Macquarie electorate, however its submission suggests substantial changes to neighbouring electorates within the Hunter Region, including a significant restructure and renaming of the Upper Hunter and Port Stephens electorates.

While I offer no significant view on that suggestion, I would remind Commissioners that the Hunter-Central Coast region currently has 13 districts, a current quota of 13.14 and a projected quota in 2023 of 13.20. In my view, such significant changes in the region are unwarranted and could unnecessarily impact neighbouring electorates into the future.

### **National Party of Australia – NSW**

As with the submission from the Liberal Party, I ask the Commissioners to note that the National Party also agrees that the Lake Macquarie boundaries remain unchanged. They say the electorate can be "self-serving in ensuring that (Lake Macquarie) meets the necessary current and projected enrolment requirements".

### **The Greens NSW**

As with the submission from the Liberal and National parties, The Greens also make no submission on any change to the existing boundaries of Lake Macquarie.

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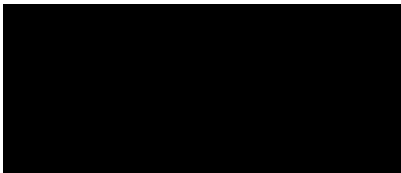
The Greens submission does, however, suggest the Commission considers changing the name of districts to reflect local Aboriginal heritage. While I accept the good intentions of The Greens, I favour the retention of the existing name of Lake Macquarie.

In 2005, as Mayor of the City of Lake Macquarie, I appeared before the NSW Electoral Commission to object to a proposal to rename the Lake Macquarie electorate Morisset. The Commission agreed with my view at the time that the 'community of interest' objective would be compromised by a change to the electorate name.

While a suburb of Lake Macquarie does not exist, it is the name applied to the local council, to the lake itself and to the geographical region, and should be retained. I believe this view is held broadly by the local constituency, including those in the local Biraban Aboriginal community. No one, to my knowledge, has ever requested or suggested that the name of Lake Macquarie be changed to Biraban.

I thank you again for the opportunity to make this submission. I would be happy to discuss this submission with the Commissioners at any stage in the future.

Yours sincerely,



Greg Piper MP  
**Member for Lake Macquarie**