



Comment on suggestions 15

John Macdonald

2 pages

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RE: Redistribution of Victorian electoral boundaries (Division of Goldstein)

C/- FedRedistribution-VIC@aec.gov.au

Dear Committee,

I wish to place the following comments and suggestions before your Committee in relation to the discussion around redistribution of the Victorian electoral boundaries for the Division of Goldstein.

By way of background, I have lived in, and been a constituent of the Federal Electorate of Goldstein for almost 25 years – and prior to retiring, also worked in Goldstein for over 10 consecutive years. During my career, much of my work involved brokering partnerships between the 3 levels of Government businesses, community groups and other key stakeholders.

It is my experience that individual business owners and residents have increasingly become disengaged from the democratic process (especially from a federal perspective), with a great many having little or no idea that they reside in Goldstein. I believe that unless they are passionate about a particular political issue; or are exposed to specific media reporting (such as ‘teal candidate’ Zoe Daniel’s federal election campaign and victory in 2022), then significant numbers of voters either don’t know or don’t care which Electorate they reside in; or indeed, Federal issues in general as they are seen as too remote or irrelevant.

The many hundreds of voters in the volunteer community group ‘Voices of Goldstein’ which fosters democratic engagement via community consultation and participation is of course a welcome exception and a notable success story.

I believe that one of the reasons for poor voter Electorate awareness and democratic disengagement is that electorate boundaries can appear quite arbitrary in relation to local geography. By this I mean that people identify their location via suburbs, or sometimes clearly understood LGA boundaries. For example:

- Mostly, Hampton Street is the boundary between the suburbs of Brighton and Hampton
- Mostly, the Nepean Highway the boundary between the LGAs of Bayside and Glen Eira in the north, and Kingston in the south.

In both cases, these ‘easy to identify’ boundaries help residents understand and remember their location in a more meaningful way.

I therefore support the reasons put forward by Zoe Daniel (submission S34) in relation to the redistribution of electoral boundaries for Goldstein:

- **Highett:** The small area between the Sandringham train line and the Nepean Highway should be included in Goldstein to create a more unified community and mitigate against confusion about which Electorate those voters reside in

- **Elwood:** Once again, the most logical, easily understood and boundary that encapsulates the common interests of residents would be to continue the Glen Huntly Road border between the Divisions of Goldstein and Macnamara towards the west to include encompass the southern end of Elwood.

I urge you to diminish resident / voter confusion by creating more logical and easily understood Electorate boundaries wherever possible.

Kind regards,

John Macdonald

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