



# Comment on objections 91

Tom Zheng

2 Pages

Dear Redistribution Committee

I am writing to you in relation to the redistribution of Victorian electoral boundaries. In particular, I am writing to you in relation to Box Hill.

I have been very closely connected to Box Hill for over 20 years. I have owned, and continue to own, businesses in Box Hill. I have also been actively involved in the fabric of the community, most recently as President of the Asian Business Association of Whitehorse (ABAW).

In that role I led the ABAW's organisation of community festivals and fundraising events for the benefit of our community. Our largest and most well-known event at that time (which continues today) was the Chinese Lunar New Year festival held in Box Hill annually which attracted more than 100,000 attendees each year.

I am primarily writing to support the proposed redistribution, including uniting Box Hill into the electorate of Menzies.

In past redistributions it has been correctly accepted that Box Hill has a close and growing relationship with Doncaster to our north and Glen Waverley to our south.

When Box Hill was in the Chisholm electorate, it was appropriate to be located in the same electorate as Glen Waverley. But now with a seat being abolished in the south, it is absolutely correct to unite Box Hill into an electorate with Doncaster, its natural neighbour to the north.

I am particularly aware that in your 2021 Proposed Distribution report, you acknowledged this in paragraph 389, where you stated that your Committee:

has been able to address communities of interest by transferring the localities of Box Hill North, Blackburn North and portions of Box Hill, Blackburn, Nunawading and Mitcham to the proposed Division of Menzies. This emphasises the close community links between these localities, notably transport links, main roads, school zones and Box Hill Hospital.

This is consistent with the earlier paragraph in that same report which responded to comments debating whether Box Hill was a better fit in Menzies or Deakin, by writing in paragraph 171 that:

...communities north of Whitehorse Road, currently situated in the Division of Chisholm, to be better aligned with localities in the south of the Division of Menzies, particularly around Doncaster and Donvale. The Redistribution Committee considered the community of interest arising from shared social, recreational and health care links between these areas.

This appropriately recognises the close relationship between Box Hill and Doncaster, including through a large Chinese diaspora community.

But the coherent connection between Box Hill and Doncaster goes much further than simply the similar ethnic makeup of these areas. For example:

- The multiple road connections mean the connectivity between the two areas is excellent. Elgar Rd, Station St, Middleborough Rd and Surrey Rd all connect Box Hill and Doncaster residents;
- For Box Hill residents the main significant shopping centre is Westfield Doncaster. And Box Hill Central offers Asian speciality stores heavily utilised by Doncaster residents.

- The Box Hill medical precinct, including Box Hill Hospital services residents to our north in Doncaster and surrounding suburbs, including Mont Albert.
- There are also shared school zones between Box Hill and suburbs to our north including Doncaster. These include Koonung Secondary College, Box Hill Secondary and Doncaster Secondary.
- These close connections are also replicated in our sporting competitions and other community groups, for example the Eastern Districts Junior Basketball Association to just name one.

Finally, I am pleased that the AEC has previously rejected the suggestion that Box Hill should fall within an electorate that stretches all the way to Croydon (most recently advocated for in OB487). The obvious disconnection between these areas is something that I want to note again and oppose in the strongest possible terms.

I am surprised that any serious submission would argue that Box Hill, as a major activity centre in its own right, should be included in a federal electorate with no obvious shared communities like that suggested in OB487.

Thank you again for considering my thoughts on this matter.

Tom Zheng