



# Comment on objections 96

Cassandra Fernando MP

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## **COMMENT ON OBJECTIONS TO PROPOSED DIVISION OF HOLT**

As the Federal Member for the Division of Holt, I would like to thank the Redistribution Committee for their hard work on the proposed redistribution of the boundaries of the Federal Electoral Divisions of Victoria.

I am a resident of the Division of Holt and have lived in Melbourne's Southeast ever since I migrated to Australia 25 years ago. My entire life has been based in the region. It is where I went to primary school, high school and worked before entering Parliament.

I have a deep knowledge of the local area, communities and geography. I believe that in their redistribution, the AEC has taken the most logical and rational approach in drawing the new borders for the Division of Holt.

### **Proposed AEC redistribution:**

277. The Division of Holt borders five electoral divisions, however, has limited scope to transfer electors. To the east, the Division of La Trobe is also required to transfer electors, while to the west, the Division of Isaacs is impacted by consequential changes following the proposed abolition of the Division of Higgins. The neighbouring Divisions of Dunkley and Flinders are required to gain electors, yet more logical alterations to their boundaries along Port Phillip Bay limit their capacity to gain additional electors.

278. Owing to these limitations, the Redistribution Committee proposes transferring 7,866 projected electors in the portion of the locality of Cranbourne North to the east of Narre Warren-Cranbourne Road to the proposed Division of Bruce, which needs to gain electors. This proposal allows both electoral divisions to meet the numerical requirements of the Electoral Act, while transferring a high growth area to the proposed Division of Bruce. Additionally, this change contracts the proposed Division of Holt toward Western Port Bay, catering to current and future growth in the localities of Clyde, Cranbourne South, and Devon Meadows.

### **Communities of Interest in Holt:**

In defining the Division of Holt 2 major principles define the electorate:

- 1) Casey South SA3 - The division of Holt encompasses nearly the entirety of the Casey South SA3. This is important for the collection of census data and the provision of government services.
- 2) South Gippsland Highway - runs directly through the centre of Holt and connects all major communities along its path.

## Means of Communication and Travel

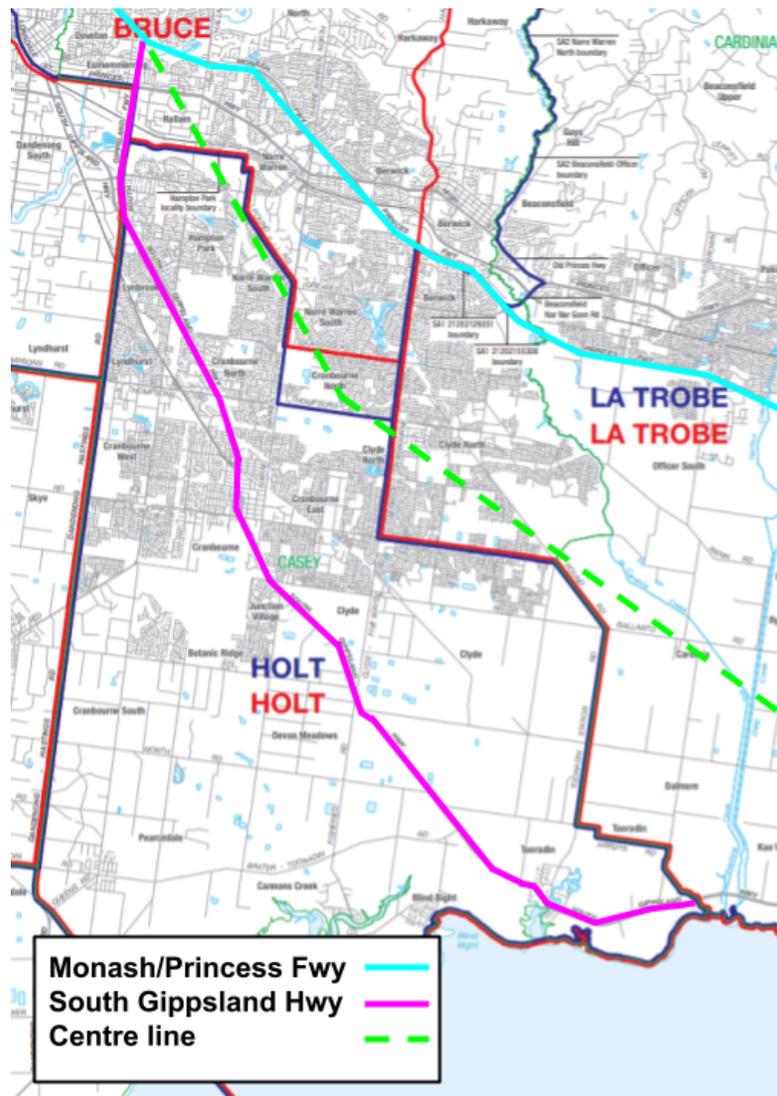
The proposed redistribution aligns logically with Section 66(3)(b)(ii) of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918, which emphasises the importance of considering means of communication and travel within each proposed electoral division.

In the case of the Division of Holt, the South Gippsland Highway serves as a central and prominent feature, running through the centre of the division and facilitating communication and travel. This structuring is similar to the Division of Bruce in the north, which is centred along the Monash/Princess Freeway.

The South Gippsland Hwy connects every major community in the division and provides connectivity to the major activity centres in Dandenong, Clayton and Melbourne CBD for residents.

By organising divisions around the major transportation routes, the Redistribution Committee has ensured that there is connectivity and cohesion within each division. This approach not only improves accessibility for the electorate but also supports the goal of creating divisions that reflect natural patterns of travel and communication.

In considering which suburb to remove from Holt these paths of travel and communication need to be considered with Cranbourne North sitting logically halfway between these two major roads.



## School Zones

School zones represent a crucial community of interest to consider in electoral redistributions due to their significant impact on local communities' social and economic activities.

These zones often define neighbourhoods where families share common concerns and priorities, such as the quality of education, child safety, and local infrastructure. Schools serve as central hubs for community interaction, fostering relationships among residents through shared participation in school events, sports, and other extracurricular activities.

By keeping school zones intact within electoral divisions, the Redistribution Committee can ensure that the voices of these communities are collectively represented, ensuring that a Member of Parliament can address their specific needs and challenges.

As a Federal MP, part of our role is to provide civics education within their electorate. This can often be confusing to students and their parents if the Federal MP who speaks at a school isn't from their electorate.

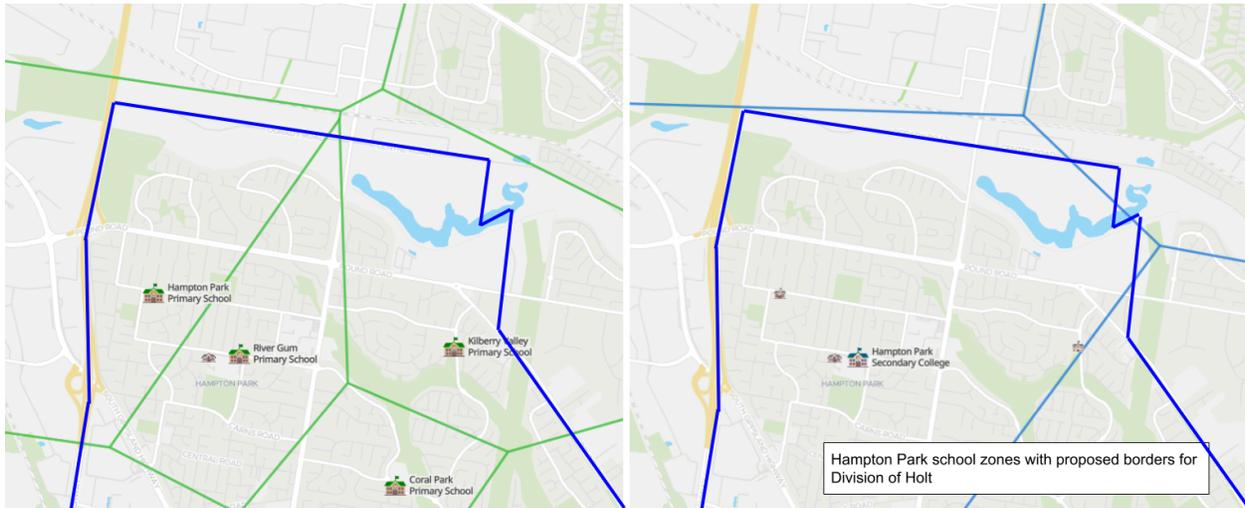
Currently, Alkira Secondary College crosses the border between Bruce and Holt with half of its students in the Bruce section of Narre Warren South and half in Cranbourne North in Holt.

This is also repeated with the catchment of Hillsmeade which is currently located in the Division of Bruce and captures students from Cranbourne North within Holt.



By moving Cranbourne North into Bruce the catchment of these schools will fall nearly entirely within the Division of Bruce. The movement of any other suburb such as Hampton Park from Holt into Bruce would find the communities defined by school zones more divided than under the proposed model.

Currently, the catchment of Hampton Park Primary School and Hampton Park Secondary College falls within Holt and Isaacs and the catchment of River Gum Primary School falls entirely within Holt. This means that the northern border of these school catchment zones is the same as that of the Federal Division.



If the Redistribution Committee were to move the border of Holt south into Hampton Park it would see these school zones further divided between Federal Divisions.

### **Casey South Statistical Areas**

The proposed redistribution of the Division of Holt aligns with the current boundaries of the Casey South SA3. This alignment encompasses the entirety of Holt's western and southern borders, the eastern border from Westport Bay to Paterson Road, and the boundary between Hallam and Hampton Park in the north.

Where the Redistribution Committee has chosen to cross the boundary of the Casey South SA3 they have done so by using SA2 boundaries. This was accomplished in the previous redistribution by moving the Narre Warren South (East) SA2 into Bruce. The current proposed electoral boundaries propose moving the entirety of the Cranbourne North (East) SA2 into the division of Bruce keeping the remaining SA2s in the Division of Holt united.

I believe that the Redistribution Committee has made the correct decision in keeping the boundary of Holt and Bruce along the Casey SA3 boundary between Hallam and Hampton Park and, along the Western Port Hwy and Western Port coast.

By maintaining these boundaries, the redistribution ensures cohesive data collection across the SA3, which is crucial for the effective provision of government services to the community. One example is the designation of Distribution Priority Areas for GP clinics, where accurate and

localised data is essential to determine community needs and ensure adequate access to healthcare services.

Additionally, local governments, are integral communities of interest and, often organise community events, after-school care programs, and manage community facilities, as well as services such as waste management and road maintenance.

SA3s typically encompass either entirely or partially a local government area, therefore aligning a Federal Division with a single local government area can simplify the interaction between different levels of government. This alignment assists Members of Parliament in their efforts to collaborate on projects with their local government. This ensures that the provision of services and representation of community interests are done to the maximum effect. Ultimately, this approach to redistribution strengthens communities of interest, enhancing the overall effectiveness of representation and service delivery within the Division.

I oppose any proposals that would subdivide an SA2 or unnecessarily cross an SA3 boundary as this would make it more difficult to provide government services.

### **Summary**

The Redistribution has made the logical choice to keep the borders of Holt aligned with that of Casey South SA3 and only shifted them in areas where required by aligning with SA2 boundaries. The current redistribution proposal as released on 31 May 2024 will allow the most effective provision of government services within my electorate.

By basing Holt along the South Gippsland Highway the Redistribution Committee has best considered the means of communication and travel that best serve the communities in Holt.

As the Federal Member of Parliament and a resident of Holt I believe that the proposed boundaries that the Redistribution Committee has included in the redistribution report, released on 31 May 2024, represent the most logical, adequate and harmonious outcome for the residents of my electorate.

I am happy to provide any additional information as needed and participate in any hearings required.

Warm Regards,

Cassandra Fernando MP  
**Federal Member for Holt**