

To the Redistribution Committee:

I am an Inner North resident, and I prefer that all suburbs of Canberra's Inner North remain in the same electorate, meeting the requirements of Section 36(c) of the Electoral Act 1992. These include duly considering community of interests, communication and travel within the Inner North, physical features and area, boundaries of existing electorates and boundaries of divisions and sections fixed under the Districts Act 2002.

I would also prefer that the Inner North suburbs be combined with the Inner South suburbs to form a single Central Canberra electorate. An electorate name for Central Canberra could be based upon Lake Burley Griffin, which is the most prominent geographic feature in the area and is bounded by both the Inner North and Inner South.

Of course, if I were a resident of any other district, I would prefer that all suburbs in that district be in the same electorate.

Unfortunately, fixing the number of members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) per electorate will continue the same fundamental problem we have experienced from past redistributions, where suburbs that naturally align with one electorate are hived off into another electorate with which they may have little community of interest. This has happened with suburbs in Gungahlin and Woden in the past, and it will continue to occur under the new electoral set-up. In fact, it is almost impossible for it *not* to occur, guaranteeing electorates that are sub-optimal in meeting requirements of Section 36(c).

This problem can be fixed by modifying Section 34 of the Electoral Act so that electorate boundaries are fixed around specific districts (Belconnen, Gungahlin, Central Canberra (Inner North & Inner South), Woden & Weston Creek, and Tuggeranong) with number of MLAs per electorate reflecting the proportion of population in each district.

Present population estimates would result with Gungahlin and Woden/Weston Creek having 4 MLAs each, Central Canberra having 5 MLAs, and Belconnen and Tuggeranong having 6 MLAs each. All appear to be between 90% and 110% of quota, meeting the requirements of Section 67D of the Commonwealth Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Act 1988.

While such a distribution is not possible under the present version of the Electoral Act, it is possible to amend the Electoral Act to allow electorates with number of MLAs based upon relative population of districts, with any deviation from this being determined solely by requirements of Section 67D of the Commonwealth Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Act 1988.

This would significantly reduce the perennial problem of suburbs (along with their residents) being hived between electorates.

Mike Hettinger