



**THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Comment on Objections 43

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2 pages

Re: Comments on the Proposed Redistribution of the Division of Warringah, abolition of North Sydney and consideration given to the abolition of Warringah

Firstly, I wish to note that due to family illnesses I inadvertently missed the deadline to Object to the proposed redistribution. If I had done so I would have **strongly objected to the abolition of North Sydney and the consideration given to the abolition of Warringah.**

I am therefore responding to the Objections made. I will refer to three in particular, because they align closely with my own thinking. These are Objections #671 by Zali Stegall, the sitting Member for Warringah; #681 by Kirsty Gold; and # 686 by Kylie Tink, the sitting Member for North Sydney.

I fully support everything stated in all three Objections.

I am appalled that two such strongly democratic, community led not politically led electorates should be considered to be abolished in a thinly veiled attempt by the Liberals and National Parties to turn the tide against strong Independent candidates being elected. The circus that is the current US election tells us just how fragile democracy is when big money buys political parties. Election of strong local candidates who care, understand local issues and aren't part of the political machine, is at the heart of good, sound and ethical democratic rights. And the strong shift to wonderful Independents is also at the heart of the community's strong desire to move away from grubby, cynical politics to genuine representation on issues that really matter. As Zali Stegall correctly notes *"Community independents have mobilised thousands of constituents in their respective electorates to actively engage in the political process, each with their own specific concerns which are unique to the current divisions. This groundswell of interest in the political process highlights the strength of these communities of interest and their engagement in Australian democracy."* [Objection # 671]

The declining major party vote, the contribution of crossbenchers, and their strong role in government all tell a story of strong community engagement with Independents because they listen to the voters not to big business and big donors. I would hope that the AEC is well above the grubby politics and can see through the desperation of the Liberals and the National Party. They are desperate because thinking voters have had enough of party politics and want to be represented by people who can maintain their independence and integrity, and vote and act in Parliament according to the issues and policy stand they made when we voted for them.

I note from Zali Stegall's objection [# 671] that a consequence of the draft redistributions is that the divisions proposed to be abolished in both NSW and Vic are currently represented by female Members of Parliament. As she notes *"It is imperative that the composition of the House of Representatives accurately reflects the Australian population and upholds principles of gender equality and diversity."* Unconscionable in the current era to even consider reducing the number of women holding seats in Parliament by simply dissolving their seats. Unbelievable. Horrible. This is the reality of grubby politics – they just don't care

and wonder why the electorate is so absolutely, thoroughly disillusioned and fed up. Please DON'T take away Independent seats! The major parties need to rethink their strategy and win community trust not abolish community led seats. As Kirsty Gold [Objection # 681] notes *"A well-functioning democratic political system must be our first priority as a society. It relies on active community engagement and effective representation. The proposed dissolution of the North Sydney electorate would significantly disrupt a highly engaged community, undermining both democratic participation and community cohesion. Preserving engaged electoral communities is crucial for maintaining the strength and integrity of our democratic system. "*

North Sydney electorate is about to experience a massive boost in resident numbers, why on earth would this be an electorate to abolish? Kylie Tink [Objection # 686] *" Local Councils in the division are forecasting 13,100 newly completed homes in the next five years:*

- *North Sydney Housing Target: 5,900 newly completed homes by 2029*
- *Willoughby Housing Target: 3,400 newly completed homes by 2029*
- *Lane Cove Housing Target: 3,400 newly completed homes by 2029*
- *Hunters Hill Housing Target: 400 newly completed homes by 2029*

And NSW Planning refers to changes to LEP's that will deliver 8680 new homes by 2036: - 6680 in Crows Nest and - 2000 In St Leonards .

I too urge the AEC committee to preserve both the Warringah and North Sydney divisions, recognizing their thriving and democratically engaged communities, growing populations and many long established communities of interest.

I understand yours is not an easy or simple task, but I urge you to rise above the demands of major parties in crisis and carefully consider the impact such changes will make to such well established, connected, cohesive and functional communities.

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