



Your strong and independent
voice for livestock producers

LIVESTOCK SA...

Unit 5, 780 South Road, Glandore SA 5037

P 08 8297 2299 F 08 8293 8886

E admin@livestocksa.org.au

livestocksa.org.au

20L094

23 June 2020

The Electoral Districts Boundaries Commission

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for allowing me to make a representation to the Commission today regarding the proposed 2020 redistribution of electoral boundaries.

I cannot profess to have a great knowledge or even interest in the intricacies of percentage points over or under the allowed quotas for electoral regions. I do however have a strong interest in the premise of electoral justice for the regions and the ongoing fair representation of my region and the pastoral industry in the political system of South Australia, an ideal that I have been passionately pursuing for many years as a community representative and now Board Member of Livestock SA.

I have noticed that of the many submissions received by the Commission, not one was from the area which I live, no consultation or investigation into the issues faced by the pastoral community of the State had been done by any of those making representation and address that shortfall I will say to you today:

We, the pastoralists of South Australia are already suffering from a lack of representation and advocacy on our behalf. Most of us live and carry out businesses in an area that has no local council and therefore no democratically elected representatives to advocate on our behalf. For too long we have been ignored and forgotten by politicians, governments, and policy makers. We would urge the Commission to view any proposed amendment to the boundaries as an opportunity to promote electoral justice to those who live and work in the most remote areas of the State.

We strongly oppose any substantial changes to the electorates of Giles and Stuart. Already the pastoral community is split into the haves and have nots, with those lucky enough to be included in Stuart having an electoral office based in Port Augusta, whereas those in Giles find themselves included with the industrial town of Whyalla, and their local State representative located there as well, a town that provides no services to the pastoral regions and is as strange to us as Adelaide.

Port Augusta is the natural place for any representative of the Far North to be based, given that most pastoralists have strong ties to the Port Augusta community. It is where our medical care is located, the Royal Flying Doctor Service, it is the hub for our education providers, Port Augusta School of the Air, and the Remote & Isolated Children's Exercise. It is where we do business with major agricultural partners Elders and Nutrien Ag and is also where SAPOL has the head of the Far North Local Service Area. It is where the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure's Outback Roads division has their base, as well as the Outback Communities Authority and the SA Arid Lands Natural Resource Management Board. All of these are essential services that are utilised by the pastoral community. To further weaken connections or ties to this community by

redistribution of the electoral boundaries will be yet another blow to an area already suffering from more than 3 years of drought.

I cannot provide maps or tables of figures. I can only give my evidence to the Commission based on the practicalities of the situation and how any significant change will affect the lives and businesses of those who live and work in the pastoral areas. I can offer first-hand testimony of the hardships faced by those who have not had equitable representation at any level of Government for well over 20 years.

If substantial changes are made to the electoral boundaries, it will mean that our vote as business owners and operators and residents of the Far North of SA cannot influence any of the services that are vital to us, as is currently the case with pastoral residents in the electorate of Giles. Their votes are effectively wasted as they will never be on parity with the residents of Whyalla. The 2 communities have completely different needs and ideals.

For the pastoralists of South Australia, community of interests is an important factor. For the best representation of all pastoralists, it would be best if they were both all together and in the same electorate as Port Augusta. We encourage the Commission to consider not only electorates with the same number of voters, but also community of interests. Of all the areas of the State where the community of interests are the same, it would be the pastoral region – even in most farming areas there is more diversity of people and purpose.

Livestock SA on behalf of our pastoral members strongly urges the South Australian Electoral Districts Boundaries Commission to carefully consider the impact that a redistribution of boundaries will have on the people of the Far North and to take into account that electoral justice for the regions will not be achieved by a simple change of boundary.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ghell', written in a cursive style.

Gillian Fennell
Lambina Station - Marla