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Submission:

I am writing as a resident of Far North Queensland who regularly lives across the Cairns and Tablelands communities affected by this proposal. I spend my working weeks in Cairns and my weekends on the Atherton Tablelands. Through that experience I have seen firsthand that these regions are not variations of the same community; they are fundamentally different places with different priorities and ways of life.

The Tablelands is farming country. Conversations there centre on rainfall, road access, land values, livestock, and the cost of getting agricultural product to market. It is a rural inland region whose concerns are tied directly to agriculture and land management.

The communities that form the proposed electorate of Hill are something else entirely. From Innisfail and Tully through to Mission Beach and Cardwell, this coastal corridor shares its own economic and geographic realities. It is banana and sugar country, a region frequently affected by flooding and cyclones, and one that depends heavily on the Bruce Highway as a critical transport and service link. These communities share infrastructure, services, and common challenges that naturally bind them together. They are not the same community as Cairns, and they are not the same community as the Tablelands. **They are their own distinct region and they deserve to be represented as one.**

What concerns me most about the proposed redistribution is that these communities would be divided between electorates whose centres of gravity lie elsewhere. Mulgrave is largely centred on Cairns. Hinchinbrook looks south toward Ingham. A redrawn Traeger stretches inland across the Tablelands and western regions. Under this arrangement, the Hill communities would not be represented as a single region, but instead split across three separate electorates.

Communities on the southern edge of the current Mulgrave electorate already experience the challenges of being located on the periphery of a seat whose focus is largely centred on Cairns. Areas around Gordonvale and further south often struggle to receive the same level of political attention as communities closer to Cairns. Expanding Mulgrave further into the communities currently within Hill risks compounding this issue, stretching representation across an even broader and more diverse area and making it harder for coastal communities to have their concerns consistently heard.

The result is not improved representation but the loss of a collective voice for a distinct part of Far North Queensland.

The electorate of Hill exists because these coastal communities form a recognisable region with shared geography, infrastructure, and economic pressures. Maintaining a dedicated electorate centred on these communities would better reflect their clear community of interest and support more effective representation in the Queensland Parliament.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask the Electoral Commission Queensland to reconsider the proposed abolition of the Hill electorate and retain a dedicated district representing these coastal communities.