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Submission:

I'm submitting this because I have serious concerns about the current proposed redistribution process and where it leads Queensland in practice.

I understand redistribution is required, I also understand population balancing is the legal foundation. This isn't where my qualm stands.

My issue is whether the outcome of this process preserves fair representation, or whether it creates a system where electoral outcomes are shaped more by boundary design than by voter intent.

From what has been proposed, there is a consistent pattern where proposed boundary changes appear to advantage the current government, including in areas where voting behaviour would otherwise suggest competitive or marginal outcomes. Whether intentional or not, that is exactly the type of structural distortion this Commission exists to prevent.

My concerns exist as Queensland has already lived through this. The Fitzgerald Inquiry exposed a system where electoral boundaries were manipulated to keep a government in power without majority support. That era, under Joh Bjelke-Petersen, is the reason this redistribution framework exists in the first place.

This era proved that you don't need to rig votes if you can rig how votes are counted geographically.

While not necessarily illegal, gerrymandering is absolutely corrosive to democratic legitimacy and any redistribution that trends toward favourable partisan outcomes risks undermining the integrity of the system itself.

Redistricting for the outcome of evidently favourable partisan results is inherently detestable and negatively sways the ability for Queensland to engage in a true ongoing democratic process

This Commission's role is to sit above this, to preempt and prevent us falling back into a corrupt or biased regressions

A key issue here is not just the maps themselves, but the structure that produced them.

The appointment of John Sosso raises legitimate concerns about perceived and practical impartiality. This is not about alleging intent, it's about recognising that institutional trust depends on independence being both tangible and visible.

In this case:

- The current government had unilateral ability to appoint the Commissioner
- Bipartisan support is no longer required
- The appointee has longstanding historical associations with prior governments involved in electoral boundary controversies
- The same individual previously played a role in restructuring oversight bodies connected to this process

Even if we assume genuine intent and progression forward can be done bi-partisanly regardless. And even if this appointment and every decision made post is technically compliant, the structure created assumes a reasonable perception risk that the process is not fully independent.

And perception matters, because once trust in redistribution is lost, the legitimacy of every election that follows is weakened.

Beyond perception, the practical effect on voters is that votes can be diluted or concentrated in ways that reduce their ability to meaningfully influence outcomes within their own communities, this leaves the voter feeling as though the system services what the government of 'current day' requires to maintain power.

Stepping away from personalities, the maps themselves raise analytical concerns.

There are clear indicators of partisan asymmetry, where similar vote shares could produce unequal outcomes.

This appears to be happening through a combination of:

- Vote packing — concentrating opposing voters into fewer electorates with larger margins
- Vote cracking — distributing similar voters across multiple electorates to reduce their influence

The result is a gap where one side requires fewer votes to win seats.

A perfect example is the proposed changes to the electorate of Gaven:

- Previously: ~0.6% Labor margin
- Proposed: ~5.4% LNP margin

This is not a reflection of a 5% shift in public opinion. This is a function of boundary design / electorate carving.

Similar dynamics appear in Logan / Gold Coast area, particularly around Beenleigh:

- Communities with shared infrastructure and services (e.g. transport corridors, economic ties) are being split
- Other areas with limited connection are being combined
- The net effect is a shift from a ~1.9% Labor margin to a ~0.8% LNP margin

Again, not driven by voters changing their minds, but by how those voters are grouped.

The most concerning part is how this affects community of interest, which should be the primary principle for redistribution.

In multiple cases:

- Established communities are being divided across electorates
- Areas with clear functional ties (transport, services, employment) are separated
- New electorates are being formed from areas that do not share cohesive local interests

This creates two problems at once:

1. Voters lose effective representation because their MP no longer represents a coherent community
2. Electoral outcomes become more sensitive to boundary design than to actual voter preference

This is beyond a partisan issue it degrades representation for everyone involved.

Taken together, I would like it noted that the redistribution appears to systematically improve the LNP's ability to retain marginal seats and increases the statewide swing required for a change of government. While not every individual seat favours the LNP, the aggregate effect of the redistribution appears to strengthen their electoral position.

However, this is beyond Labor vs LNP.

This is about whether Queensland ends up with a system where:

- Votes translate into seats in a broadly fair way
- Communities are represented as actual evident communities
- The redistribution process is trusted to be neutral in both practice and perception

Based on the current proposal, there is sufficient reason to question all three.

At a minimum, I believe this Commission should:

- Test and publish partisan symmetry scenarios (uniform swing analysis)
- Assess potential efficiency gaps created by the proposed boundaries
- Provide clearer justification where communities of interest are split
- Consider projected growth, not just current enrolment
- Address the perception of independence, not just technical compliance
- Address the practice and possibility of partisan redistricting
- Repeal and assess for neutrality in how the commissioner is appointed (require bipartisan or independent selection)

Queensland has already seen what happens when redistribution is allowed to drift away from neutrality. And I believe it is far from partisan to agree that corruption and erosion of a true and balanced representative democratic process is any more than a net negative for Queenslanders.

The entire reason this Commission exists is because that line was crossed once before.

Even if the current proposal is defensible on paper, the combination of:

- structural concerns
- consistent directional boundary changes
- weakened public trust
- questionable intent

means it does not meet the standard expected of a genuinely impartial redistribution.

That alone should be enough to warrant reconsideration or negation

Rory