

Submission ID: CS-0012
Date Received: 4/9/25, 10:53 am
Name: Cr Joel Richters
Submission Topic: Electorate Names
Electoral District: Southern Downs
Related Submissions:

Submission:

See below

Submission Attachments

250904 Redistribution Letter.pdf

4 September 2025

Queensland Redistribution Commission
GPO Box 1393
Brisbane QLD 4001

Dear Commissioners

I write to make a submission concerning the name of the State Electoral District of Southern Downs. The current name causes confusion with the Southern Downs Regional Council, a local government area with similar geographic boundaries. This duplication creates unnecessary misunderstanding for electors, stakeholders, and the community when distinguishing between local government and state electoral matters.

I respectfully propose that the district be renamed to better reflect either the historical significance of the region or its distinctive geography. Two options are outlined below: **Hilton** or **Border Rivers**.

Option A: Rename the District to Hilton

This option honours **Paul Jerome Remigius Hilton (1899–1965)**, who served with distinction as a Member of the Queensland Legislative Assembly from **1935 to 1963**. Representing the seat of Carnarvon, which included the Stanthorpe district and areas now within the current Southern Downs electorate.

Hilton's parliamentary career spanned nearly three decades, during which he became **Secretary for Public Works, Housing, and Local Government (1950–1956)**. In this role he was instrumental in addressing the severe shortages of housing and classrooms during and after the Second World War, including negotiating contracts for prefabricated housing and school facilities. His contribution provided essential support for Queensland families and communities during a time of great hardship and reconstruction.

Hilton is remembered not only for his public works but also for his deep commitment to his electorate. Renaming the district in his honour would provide enduring recognition of his service, while giving the electorate a distinct and meaningful name that avoids confusion with the local government area.

Option B: Rename the District to Border Rivers

Alternatively, I propose the name Border Rivers, which reflects the defining geographic and environmental features of this region. The headwaters of the **Condamine River** rise near Killarney within the electorate, while the **Severn River, Pike Creek, Macintyre Brook, Weir River, Dumaresq River**, and **Macintyre River** form an interconnected system collectively known as the Border Rivers.

These rivers define the Queensland–New South Wales border and are central to the agricultural, cultural, and ecological identity of the region. They are not only a source of water and productivity but also a natural marker of the electorate’s location. Naming the district Border Rivers would provide a clear, unifying identity rooted in geography and community connection to place.

Alignment with Redistribution Principles

The proposed name change does not affect the numerical balance or boundaries of the electorate. It is consistent with the Redistribution Commission’s objectives by:

- **Eliminating Confusion:** Avoiding duplication with the Southern Downs Regional Council.
- **Enhancing Identity:** Providing either a historically significant name (Hilton) or a geographically descriptive one (Border Rivers).
- **Reflecting Community Values:** Recognising both local heritage and the natural environment as defining features of the area.

Conclusion

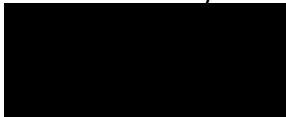
For the reasons outlined above, I respectfully submit that the Commission give consideration to renaming the State Electoral District of Southern Downs to either:

1. **Hilton**, in honour of Paul J. R. Hilton MLA, who represented this district with distinction from 1935 to 1963; or
2. **Border Rivers**, to reflect the electorate’s unique geography and its close association with the headwaters of the Condamine and the rivers forming the Queensland–New South Wales border.

I would like to stress that I make this submission as a Councillor for Southern Downs Regional Council, and that I am not acting in an official capacity as spokesperson for the entirety of council; and that my option should not be seen as the official position of Southern Downs Regional Council.

I commend this submission to the Commission and thank you for considering this matter as part of the redistribution process.

Yours Sincerely



Councillor Joel Richters