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Name: Nick Dametto MP
Organisation Name: Member for Hinchinbrook
Submission Topic: Electorate Boundaries
Electoral District: Hinchinbrook
Related Submissions: S-110

Submission:

See below

Submission Attachments

20250922 - Nick Dametto MP Response to QRC submissions.pdf



Nick Dametto

Member For Hinchinbrook

22 September 2025

Queensland Redistribution Commission
GPO Box 1393
Brisbane QLD 4001

By email: QRCsubmissions@ecq.qld.gov.au

Dear Chairperson,

Re: Nick Dametto MP Submission – Queensland Redistribution Commission

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to submissions already made in relation to the current review of Queensland's electoral boundaries and electorate names.

While many submissions raise points worthy of consideration, this response addresses in particular **Submission S-110** made by the Liberal National Party of Queensland (LNP).

The LNP's proposal recommends abolishing the electorate of Hill and significantly redrawing the boundaries of Hinchinbrook by removing its current northern Townsville suburbs, extending the electorate northwards into Far North Queensland, and transferring Palm Island into Hinchinbrook.

In my view, this proposal is inconsistent with the guiding principles of redistribution, including the preservation of community of interest, recognition of service delivery patterns, and the maintenance of effective and practical representation. By seeking to dismantle existing linkages to Townsville while attaching communities serviced by Cairns, Submission S-110 disregards the lived realities of North Queensland communities.

Most troubling is the proposal to transfer Palm Island into Hinchinbrook on the erroneous basis of a "ferry service from Lucinda and longstanding cultural ties." This rationale is not only incorrect but dismissive of Palm Island's overwhelming reliance on Townsville for all essential services. Such an approach would not only undermine effective representation for Palm Island residents but would also weaken North Queensland's already limited parliamentary voice.

Palm Island

Palm Island should not be shifted into Hinchinbrook. Its inclusion ignores the practical realities of how this Aboriginal Shire is serviced and represented.



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All essential services to Palm Island, including air and ferry transport, policing, health, education, food, emergency response, and supplies, are provided from Townsville, not Ingham or Lucinda. The only connection to Hinchinbrook is a commercial barge operating from Lucinda.

If Palm Island were transferred into the Hinchinbrook electorate, the Member for Hinchinbrook would be required to travel via Townsville in order to access the island. Conversely, Palm Island residents seeking to meet with their local representative would first have to travel to Townsville by ferry or plane and then secure further transport north to the Hinchinbrook electorate. This arrangement is wholly impractical and would also impose an unreasonable financial burden on residents.

Palm Island is a unique community that, similar to all Aboriginal Shires, should be afforded dedicated and easily accessible representation. To cast it aside into an electorate that has no direct service linkage or alignment would cause severe detriment to the residents. Aboriginal Shire Councils require stronger, not weaker representation.

The Reality of Cross-Jurisdiction Representation

Under the LNP's proposal, the Hinchinbrook electorate would effectively be split almost fifty-fifty between North Queensland and Far North Queensland. This would force the Member to divide significant time and resources between two service hubs, Cairns and Townsville, rather than focusing their time in the electorate with constituents.

By contrast, the present boundaries enable the Member to engage meaningfully with communities across the entire electorate with the vast majority of departmental business being conducted in Townsville. This helps to bolster effective advocacy and representation by the Member on behalf of the constituents. The LNP's redistribution would isolate residents from their local MP and create unnecessary challenges in their pursuit for representation.

Reduction of North Queensland Representation

Beyond Hinchinbrook, the LNP's wider proposal to abolish the seat of Hill and reduce the number of North Queensland electorates from 13 to 12 is a direct attack on regional representation. While redistributions are necessary every eight years to reflect population changes, they should not be reduced based on a crude analysis of quotas. Geographic landmass, community diversity, industry, and service accessibility are equally important considerations to make.

Creating an additional seat in the Brisbane area to cater for population growth in the South-East, would leave North Queensland residents with fewer voices in Parliament, and therefore less political influence. Fewer votes equal less of a say and in my view that is very prejudicial to the people of North Queensland.



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Conclusion

The LNP's submission fails to maintain fairness and practicality and is not in the best interest of Queenslanders. Particularly, Palm Island must remain aligned with Townsville, where its community, economic, and service connections lie.

Hinchinbrook must retain its existing balance to remain a coherent North Queensland electorate, not a fragmented patchwork pattern extending into Far North Queensland whilst being geographically detached from either of the two major urban centres.

North Queensland should not be stripped of seats and influence for the political convenience of certain political parties.

This submission therefore urges the Commission to reject the LNP's proposal in its current form and to uphold fair and effective representation for the people of Hinchinbrook, Palm Island, and all of broader North Queensland by making no changes to the current boundaries of Hinchinbrook and not abolishing any North Queensland seats.

Thank you for considering this response.

Best Regards,

Nick Dametto MP

Member for Hinchinbrook

