



Shire of Mt Marshall

— THE SANDALWOOD SHIRE —

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ENQUIRIES TO: Mr John Nuttall

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8 June 2021

Mr Malcolm McCusker
Chair
Ministerial Expert Committee on Electoral Reform

By email: submissions@waelectoralreform.wa.gov.au

Dear Sirs,

SHIRE OF MT MARSHALL RESPONSE

On behalf of the Councillors of the Shire of Mt Marshall please accept this letter as our submission to the Ministerial Expert Committee on Electoral Reform.

The Shire wholeheartedly supports the submission lodged by WALGA on behalf of the Local Government Industry and asks the Committee to accept that submission as representing the views of the Shire of Mt Marshall.

Particularly we ask the Committee to pay regard to the following points:

Recommendation 1

That Group Ticket Voting be removed from the Legislative Council electoral system, and reforms be adopted modelled on the Senate reforms of 2016.

Reform in WA should be undertaken to remove the group voting ticket from the Legislative Council voting system similar to the Senate reforms undertaken in 2016.

The aim of removing group ticket voting would be to make it much more difficult for micro-parties to have candidates successfully elected through “preference harvesting”. The 2016 Senate reforms demonstrated that the removal of group voting tickets had this effect at the 2016 full-Senate and 2019 half-Senate elections.

Recommendation 2

That a regional system be retained, and the whole state electorate option be rejected.

The Shire of Mt Marshall supports the WALGA rejection of the option of members of the Legislative Council being elected from an electorate comprising the entire state of Western Australia, principally on the basis that rural and remote political representation would be diminished irrevocably.

Recommendation 3

That the Ministerial Expert Committee on Electoral Reform be required to consider the importance of political representation for rural and regional Western Australia.

In considering political representation it is important to acknowledge the economic contribution of non-metropolitan regions to the wealth and standard of living in Western Australia. Regional WA is home to many of the state's key export industries, including the mining and agriculture sectors.

A reduction in the number of Legislative Council representatives will further increase the pressure on remaining representatives to cover vast ground to appropriately service the region they represent. The perspective of many rural and remote communities is that, without sufficient political representation, their concerns will be "out of sight, out of mind", swamped by the sheer weight of votes from metropolitan Perth and large regional centres.

As previously mentioned, the above recommendations are based upon a full WALGA submission and we urge the Committee to accept those recommendations.

Should further information be required please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

John Nuttall
Chief Executive Officer