

**From:** Alan Meldrum  
**To:** WA Electoral Reform  
**Subject:** Review of regional WA electoral representation in the Council chamber  
**Date:** Wednesday, 9 June 2021 10:57:46 AM

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To the Ministerial Expert Committee on WA electoral reform.

I hope you may be able to include my submission despite it being past the deadline.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the review of the regional representation to the WA parliament Council Chamber (Upper House).

I lived in the wheatbelt region of WA for 25 years. In that time, I saw the level of regional and community resources decline. Hospitals that could provide for all manner of procedures now do no more than send patients on to Perth for treatment. Schools with declining populations get less teaching staff and resources leading to further decline in population – particularly for high schools.

Political representation for the lower house in regional WA declined significantly with the reforms made by the Gallop government to provide for 'one vote – one value'. Local parliamentary representatives now have an extremely large area to service. The number of seats for regional WA is very small making the significance of its voice in parliament small in comparison to the urban voice.

The WA government should NOT be seeking to reduce the voice of regional WA in the Upper House. As an analogy, the Senate composition in the federal parliament ensures the smaller states do not lose out to the bigger states by having the same number of senators. This model should be adopted or mirrored in WA.

The wealth of the WA economy is generated in the regions. To continue this, for the betterment of the entire WA community, requires an adequate say in parliamentary debates. It requires an assurance that community services and support will be maintained, that regional infrastructure will be built and maintained, to keep the regions as an attractive place to build a life and a family. Reducing representation will remove any significance of regional needs in parliamentary debates. If the concept of one vote one value to carried thought to the Upper House, Upper house representatives will be fewer, leading to lower access for constituents with the representatives having a larger geographical area to service. In any debate on sharing of resources between the regional and urban populations, the regions will loose every time. WA will be the poorer for any decline in representation.

I urge the review to consider maintaining or enhancing political representation for the regions in the Upper House for the betterment of the WA economy and community.

Yours Sincerely

Alan Meldrum

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