Adam Giles
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory

NT Electoral Commission must review draft redistribution

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The Northern Territory Electoral Commission should retain all three Alice Springs seats and rethink how it deals with population growth in Palmerston, Chief Minister Adam Giles said today.

The Chief Minister made the comments today as he lodged an objection to the Commission’s draft electoral redistribution.

Mr Giles said the Electoral Commission focussed too much on ensuring elector numbers were equal at the time of the next election without properly considering geography, future population growth and the need to keep changes to a minimum.

“The community of interest within the town of Alice Springs as well as its economic and social future will be best served if the three existing electoral divisions are retained,” he said.

“It’s inconceivable that any argument could be put forward to establish a connection between Alice Springs and places as far afield as Kalkarindji and Lajamanu.

“In just a few weeks, I have collected almost 500 signatures from Alice Springs residents calling for the existing three seats to be retained and we urge the Electoral Commission to reconsider its proposal to abolish the seat of Araluen.”

Mr Giles said the proposed redistribution moved as many as 35 per cent of voters into different seats and the Electoral Commission needed to rethink how they dealt with the population growth in Palmerston.

“While there are a number of options for how to redraw the electoral boundaries, the proposed new seat of Spillett should include at least 1000 additional voters from within Palmerston to accommodate even the most pessimistic population growth predictions,” he said.

“The Electoral Commission’s current format for Blain has such a concentration of growth areas that another redistribution could be triggered even before the next election.”

The Country Liberals Parliamentary wing objection also calls for changes in how a number of other seats have been redistributed including Arafura, Daly, Fong Lim and Sanderson.

Mr Giles said he anticipated members of the Parliamentary wing may lodge individual submissions as well.

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