

THE OFFICE OF BW NEILL
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The Chairperson
Select Committee Review
House of Assembly Member Numbers
Parliament House
HOBART TASMANIA

4 September 2019

Dear Chairperson

I present this Statement to support the retention of the current number of House of Assembly seats in the Parliament of Tasmania.

Firstly I argue that we already have a significant number of politicians to elect in Tasmania, some 57, which approximately represents one elected representative for every 9,000 Tasmanians. To increase by 10 new members changes the ratio to one for approximately every 7,600 Tasmanians.

This representation percentage is far out of balance when compared to other states. To illustrate, NSW has one member for approximately every 36,500 New South Welshmen.

To elect further politicians is to appoint persons of likely inferior representation quality when compared with the current cohort. This is not a reflection on our people but simply the talent pool in Tasmania is already severely stretched.

By the time we elect 5 Federal Members, 12 Senators, 25 House of Assembly Members and 15 Upper House Members (plus approximately 230 Aldermen), appoint business leaders, community leaders, public sector leaders and university academics, the talent pool is potentially exhausted and any additional demands will only lead to a lower standard of participants.

There is no doubt an argument for the sharing of the work load in the House of Assembly is leading to the expanding approach, but a better approach would be to review the services the State offers and to match those needs with the current ability to deliver in a quality manner.

Costs should also be a determinant, and to add a further \$8-10 million of political management expense to our costs is not a good outlay of precious resources. Had we been successful, or tried, to merge councils, we may have freed up leadership and finances but Parliament and Councils see this as logical but clearly not deliverable.

We preciously hang on to our representatives and I do not see, especially under the Hare Clark voting process, that extra House of Assembly members will improve the operation of the Parliament and support the retention of current numbers.

Yours faithfully

Bruce W Neill