

The Secretary,
(Stephanie.hesford@parliament.tas.gov.au)
Select Committee on the House of assembly Restoration Bill
Parliament House
Hobart TAS 7000



**Select Committee on the
House of Assembly Restoration Bill**

Dear Secretary,

As an interested person in wanting the best outcome for the state, I was quite excited about the House of Assembly being restored to 35 people. I applaud the idea that the talent pool would increase, people could have smaller ministries to maintain, and the hope therefore for a better government for Tasmania into the future.

But then I looked up the proposed bill and was to put it mildly, bitterly disappointed. The reasons for this are many and the opportunity to instill real change into the system of government in Tasmania I believe more readily available than ever.

The consensus of the public seems to be that there are just too many politicians as there are so just increasing the number without reductions anywhere else is a big and somewhat unnecessary expense and is just seen as politicians pushing their own interests ahead of those of the state.

Observations on the current system of government

The House of Assembly is 'where the action happens,' The House of Assembly makes policy, debates policy, and sets policy to be passed by the Legislative Assembly as the 'house of review.' It is my belief that this is normally done as a matter of course, with few amendments and rejections happening. Speaking to a member of parliament confirms this belief.

The House of Assembly pits same party members against each other in an election, which is just sheer nonsense. With the Hare Clarke system generally guaranteeing the high flyers drag a few less inspiring people across the line with them. This makes it harder for non aligned candidates to get elected.

In the same way people of any one of the 5 electorates are rightly confused as to who is their sitting member is and who they should see if they want help. Except for Hobart the politicians have to cover huge areas and be across numerous issues which vary geographically just to stay in touch, and then you can end up with 5 politicians zeroing in on an issue to the detriment of the rest of the electorate.

The Legislative Council has 15 members who have a much smaller electorate but also seem to have very little influence.

So currently Tasmania is served by 40 politicians, and it is very confusing to the average person as to "who's who in the zoo".

Under the Bill the number of politicians would increase to 50, but we would still have the same issues of competing against each other, it becoming even less clear as to who is your local member, costing the state more, and while providing better talent, can the cost be justified?

An alternate solution

Increase the House of Assembly to 41 seats, do away with the Legislative council (Queensland survives admirably, they have no less or more issues than any other state) and become a one parliament state.

Divide the existing federal electorates into 8 separate electorates, with the boundaries to be reviewed in conjunction with federal reviews.

The 41st seat required to avoid a hung parliament is to be set aside for an indigenous person, to be voted on by all people of aboriginal descent across Tasmania.

Voting would be simplified, using a full preferential system, with the indigenous member to be voted on by postal vote.

The increase in parliament size would be one, a ruling party/coalition would need 21 seats therefore allowing plenty of backbenchers to assist, and improving the talent pool available. The cost increase would be minimal and it also recognises the first Australians, and rightly enshrines their place in Tasmanian politics.

As to not having the 'house of review, people will still be able to vote with their ballots to change policy every four years and ruling parties/ coalitions will still need to prove their worth to the majority to stay in power.

So in conclusion I urge you to reconsider the current bill before parliament and take this opportunity to have real reform in the parliament both as to who represents the voter, and who the voter is represented by.

Yours Sincerely,

Paul Dare



13 February 2019