

Jack Callan

To the Constituency Commission,

I write today to suggest a restructuring of the North Dublin constituencies following the preliminary results of the 2016 census. As the census figures show there is now an average population of 30,114 per TD nationally. As this breaches the constitutional limit of 30,000 persons per TD it will be necessary to increase the number of TD's from the current 158 to 159 or 160 as per the ministerial order of July 14th 2016. My proposals are assuming one extra seat will be given to the North Dublin constituencies while another will be given in the wider Leinster region. I draw your attention to the fact that all the North Dublin constituencies are currently underrepresented, with Dublin North-West and Dublin Central being the most underrepresented constituencies nationally. While it's an awful shame that the people of North Dublin are so grossly underrepresented I feel like this presents a much-needed opportunity to restructure the constituencies in a more logical and equitable fashion.

As it stands there are breaches of local authority boundaries between Dublin city and Fingal. Its clear that such breaches are unfair to both the electorate and those seeking office. For the electorate, the performance and familiarity of councillors is of huge significance in determining choices. How can we expect people to be politically engaged if they are met with unknown names and faces come election time? For councillors who decide to run for national government and find their locality has been annexed to another constituency this represents

an unjust uphill battle which negates much of their work done at local level. To address this problem, I suggest the creation of two five-seat Fingal constituencies with an extra seat and restructuring between Dublin West and Dublin Fingal. This will allow for a reshuffle between the remaining North Dublin constituencies and address current underrepresentation while also making for more logical and equitable constituencies.

Dublin Fingal constituencies:

I propose the creation of two new constituencies created from what is currently Dublin Fingal and Dublin West. This would involve taking in the electoral districts of Baldoyle, Howth and Sutton from Dublin Bay North and the portions of some Fingal electoral divisions currently in Dublin North West. It would also see the electoral divisions of Ashtown moved to Dublin North West while the Phoenix Park should return to Dublin Central. According to the preliminary census figures the current population of Fingal is 296,214 people. In a lower house of 160 TD's this equates to 10 TD's in Fingal alone. Through taking the measures outlined above, adding a seat to what is currently Dublin West and creating two new 5 seat Fingal East and Fingal West constituencies the commission has an opportunity to redress current problems of local authority boundary breaches while simultaneously achieving its task of adjusting boundaries to suit the growth in population. These new constituencies as outlined in table 1 below would give Fingal West a variance of 0.7% from the national average of population per TD while Fingal East would be at a variance of 0.07%. I also believe the creation of a new 5 seat constituency in Dublin will be of benefit to the people of Dublin. The Fingal area represents the fastest growing part of the country, made up of a highly diverse population. Due to the lower quota needed for election in a 5-seat constituency this would aid the diversity of Fingal's population being represented; a lower quota increasing the chances of smaller parties, independents and female candidates.

Table 1. Proposed Dublin Fingal Constituencies:

Fingal West	Fingal East
Blanchardstown-Abbotstown, Fingal	Balbriggan Rural, Fingal
Blanchardstown-Blakestown, Fingal	Balbriggan Urban, Fingal
Blanchardstown-Coolmine, Fingal	Baldoyle, Fingal
Blanchardstown-Corduff, Fingal	Balgriffin, Fingal
Blanchardstown-Delwood, Fingal	Donabate, Fingal
Blanchardstown-Mulhuddart, Fingal	Holmpatrick, Fingal
Blanchardstown-Roselawn, Fingal	Howth, Fingal
Blanchardstown-Tyrrelstown, Fingal	Kinsaley, Fingal
Castleknock-Knockmaroon, Fingal	Lusk, Fingal
Castleknock-Park, Fingal	Malahide East, Fingal
Lucan North, Fingal	Malahide West, Fingal
The Ward, Fingal	Portmarnock North, Fingal
Turnapin, Fingal	Portmarnock South, Fingal
Dubber, Fingal	Rush, Fingal
Kilsallaghan, Fingal	Skerries, Fingal
Garristown, Fingal	Sutton, Fingal
Hollywood, Fingal	Swords-Glasmore, Fingal
Clonmethan, Fingal	Swords-Lissenhall, Fingal
Ballyboghil, Fingal	Swords-Seatown, Fingal
Airport, Fingal	Swords Village, Fingal
Balscadden, Fingal	
Swords-Forrest, Fingal	

Total population: 147,643

Total population: 148,571

Dublin Bay North, Dublin North-West, Dublin Central Restructure:

If the above proposals are carried out a restructure of the remaining North Dublin constituencies will be necessary. With the loss of Howth, Sutton and Baldoyle the electoral divisions of Whitehall A,B,C,D and Beaumont A should be added to Dublin Bay North from Dublin North West along with Drumcondra South B from Dublin Central. This represents a contiguous area which is all located within Dublin City. In my opinion this also represents a constituency which has more in common socio-economically than the current constituency. These measures also address current underrepresentation. If there are to be 160 TD's in the next Dail the ratio of TD per population will stand at 29,737 people per TD based on preliminary census figures. Given that the commission seeks to keep variance to within 5% of the national average you will be glad to know my proposed changes to Dublin Bay North will be within 0.02% of this figure.

As I mentioned earlier, I believe the electoral divisions of Ashtown A and B should be moved into Dublin North West. Given that this proposal has moved the Whitehall divisions, Beaumont A and parts of Fingal from the constituency, the further addition of Cabra East A and Cabra West A from Dublin Central would represent a much-improved Dublin North West. These changes would give the constituency a population of 87,360 people meaning the variance from the national average of population per TD would stand at 2.07%, well within the 5% guidelines. As outlined Dublin Central will lose Cabra East A and Cabra West A to Dublin North West and Drumcondra South B to Dublin Bay North. This will be offset by the addition of the Phoenix Park electoral division. These changes will result in a variation of 0.32% from the national average of population per TD in Dublin Central.

While the above proposals may seem radical, I strongly believe the commission should take this opportunity to do the people of Dublin justice. While the issue of breaching county

boundaries is not a problem in Dublin, local authority boundaries are not all that dissimilar given the vast populations which reside within them. Dublin City and Fingal represent two distinct regions in Dublin with their own local representation, histories and values. While breaches have been necessary in the past the preliminary census figures show there is now a chance to address this. By redrawing boundaries as outlined above the electorate will have a greater connection to their constituencies which will undoubtedly have a positive influence on political engagement, local pride and most importantly, constitutionally viable levels of representation.

Thank you for considering my submission,

Yours Faithfully,

Jack Callan