



PAT DEERING TD
Carlow-Kilkenny Constituency

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Sub 16/049

Commission Secretary,
Constituency Commission,
Room 1.65
Custom House,
Dublin 1.

Dear Secretary,

I wish to make the following submission to The Constituency Commission in relation to the formation of constituencies for the election of members to Dail Eireann. My submission relates specifically to the Dáil constituency of Carlow Kilkenny

The combined population of these two counties is 155,993 as per 2016 census figures (preliminary results). 4,501 of these live in 'East Carlow' and are currently part of Wicklow / East Carlow constituency. Most of these people feel disenfranchised because of this, they are virtually all Carlow people and yet they are represented only by Wicklow Politicians. Their nearest TD is on average more 40 miles away. This is reflected by voter apathy in recent General Election turnouts, here are some statistics from the 2016 General Election results :

Voter turnout in Carlow / Kilkenny 66%
Voter turnout in Wicklow / East Carlow 71%
Voter turnout in Wicklow (excl east Carlow) 72%
Voter turnout in East Carlow 56%.

These figures clearly demonstrate the lack of interest shown by East Carlow people in voting for Wicklow based candidates.

Within this area there are two medium sized and one very small village, five primary schools, one secondary school, two GAA clubs as well as many other community and sporting organisations and five churches.

Also at The Quay, Bagenalstown.
Monday 4.30pm - 6.30pm
Friday 10.00am - 1.00pm

The Square, Tullow.
Tuesday 10am - 4pm



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In the *Constituency Commission Public Notice* the commission is required to have regard to the following:

(c) the breaching of county boundaries shall be avoided as far as practicable

With a population of 142,332, Wicklow can now stand alone as a five-seat constituency. The combined population of Carlow and Kilkenny is small enough to create a five-seater comprising of the total territory of both counties.

The residents of East Carlow have been asked to vote in the Wicklow East Carlow Constituency. They live in County Carlow and pay all their household charges to Carlow County Council i.e. Planning Fees and development charges, Motor Tax, Local Property Tax, etc. They have always lived in County Carlow and are very proud of that. They are asked to vote and elect a public representative outside of their County. These people come to me for help with various issues that arise as most of their concerns relate to County Carlow. They feel isolated by the arbitrary boundaries that currently exist. Carlow County Council overlaps both jurisdictions.

The natural population imbalance between the two counties makes it difficult enough for Carlow to get a fair representation at national level, the current situation further compounds the problem. Carlow have secured two of the five TD's for the constituency in only one out of the last five General Elections.

County identity is in the very fabric of Irish society, as a people we have a huge sense of pride in our place, we all associate with our county in our everyday lives from local authority, to sporting activities. I therefore encourage the commission to recommend that constituency boundaries are set in line with county boundaries as far as possible, and especially where the figures allow, as is the case in Carlow Kilkenny.

Yours sincerely

Pat Deering TD

20th December 2016