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**To:** <electoralareacommittees@environ.ie>  
**Date:** 14/03/2008 12:51  
**Subject:** Electoral Boundary submission

Dear Secretary.

I wish to make a submission about the County Council electoral boundaries around Macroom/Muskerry area of Co Cork. The area is predominantly rural, where much of its population are engaged in agriculture, small indigenous companies, etc. This is in stark contrast to an urban area such as Cork City and its suburbs such as Blarney and Ballincollig. Historically there has always been close association between the people and villages in the area in both employment and social activities. It is imperative that the area be kept intact in any review of the boundaries.

--It is predominantly one Co Council Area (Macroom), from where villages such as Rylane, Baile Mhuirne, Kilmurray and their hinterlands naturally gravitate towards their market town of Macroom.

--This is an area which fits naturally together, geographically, socially and historically (The Barony of Muskerry), many sports and social organisations have established around the area eg Muskerry G.A.A. Muskerry Macra na Feirme, tourism and enterprise boards, various Dail constituency revisions have kept this general area together. This is an area similar Bandon and its hinterland. These two areas have in the past been part of the one electoral area, both areas still meet together for the Monthly Area Committee. They share many common issues such as agriculture, planning, schools, post office closures, industry and the concerns of growing towns and villages. Rebuilding a constituency including the market towns of Macroom and Bandon and their hinterlands would be a positive step.

--Key areas such as an Gaeltacht- Baile Mhuirne / Cuil Aodha, Beal Athan Ghaorthaidh and the Lee Valley with well known features such as Gougane Barra, the Gaeragh, would be best served undivided.

Dividing the area would impact negatively on it, a divided Lee Valley, a divided Gaeltacht would make it impossible for our representatives to get support for the area as a whole or might not be as concentrated on the minds of more distant representatives from larger population centres. Key infrastructural projects such as the new N22 could also suffer.

In summary, the Macroom/Muskerry area is within natural boundaries, the County Bounds to west and the Boggera Mountains to the north. The area and its people have strong historic, geographical, and cultural links which lean towards keeping it intact. There are key cultural and economic areas in the Gaeltacht and the Lee Valley tourism, division would have a huge negative impact on them. Macroom with its natural hinterland if kept together can continue to grow and flourish. It is important for the area in any new constituency review that the history, geography and culture of the Macroom/Muskerry area be kept and its identity maintained.

Yours Faithfully,  
Noel Lynch,  
Runal  
Macroom Comhairle Ceanntair