

15 May 2024

Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters

Dear Secretary

Inquiry into Civics Education, Engagement, and Participation in Australia.

We thank you for taking the time to consider our submission.

As students currently undertaking a civics subject at Beaufort Secondary College, we believe there are a number of reasons why young people in society are not engaging with civics:

- **The language and methods used are inaccessible:** A lot of the language used by government cannot be understood by the average teenager. Most teenagers do not get their information from the same sources.
- **Young people feel like their opinions aren't heard:** When young people have ideas or opinions, they feel scared to speak up as they feel the politicians will not listen to their opinions.
- **Young people don't feel like the laws are impacting them:** Issues being discussed, like housing and immigration, don't feel like they impact people like us in a regional area.
- **Unstable trust between politicians and citizens:** In general, many young people in Australia (and Australians overall) do not trust or value the promises and ideals of the main political parties, which leads to a lack of interest.

As a result, we believe that the following changes should be made in order to improve engagement with civics in Australia:

- **Use simpler language:** Parliament could use simpler English so that the average person can understand what is being considered.
- **Simplify the law making process:** the law making process should not be as complicated so that people are better able to understand it.
- **Better communicate the impact of laws:** By explaining how important political decisions that are being made are, young people would understand it better and be more interested in it.
- **Build trust:** Government should take on board the general public's opinions more in decision making.

Your Sincerely,

The Beaufort Secondary College Middle Years Humanities Class

