



THE HON CHRISTOPHER PYNE MP
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND SCIENCE
LEADER OF THE HOUSE
MEMBER FOR STURT

Dr Andrew Southcott
Chair
Standing Committee on Procedure
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Dr Southcott,

Inquiry into the Standing Orders in relation to Question Time

Thank you for the invitation to contribute to the Committee's inquiry into Question Time.

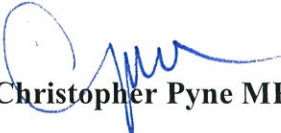
On 20 October 2015, I announced with the Prime Minister that that the government would trial a new 'Constituency Question Time': an idea that I had proposed in a speech to the Institute of Public Affairs in 2013.

During the three week trial period in 2015, 57 constituency questions were asked by 42 different government Members. 17 Ministers answered at least one constituency question. Issues covered by these questions included employment assistance for refugees; funding for Type 1 Diabetes research, LNG projects in Gladstone; jobs for residents of Western Sydney; the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing; the Moreton Bay Rail Link; rural and regional telecommunications; and the roll-out of the NBN.

The trial was very successful and, from the first sitting day of 2016, the government has adopted Constituency Question Time as a matter of practice without any change to the Standing Orders. The government is of the firm belief that Members are best placed to know what is of most concern to their constituents and that Constituency Question Time encourages a greater focus on addressing those concerns directly in the Nation's Parliament.

While the approach of the government has not required a change to the Standing Orders, I am very happy to carefully consider any recommendations that might be made to bring a greater focus on the issues that matter to our constituents.

Yours sincerely,


Christopher Pyne MP