

Citizen Initiated Referendum Bill 2013

Type	Private
Originating house	Senate
Status	Before Senate
Sponsor	MADIGAN, Senator John

Summary

Enables Australian citizens to initiate legislation that provides for the holding of a referendum to alter the Constitution by: setting out the process to be followed and the requirements to be met; providing for rules applicable to the holding of a citizen initiated referendum; setting the first referendum year as 2016 and every fourth year after that; and providing for related miscellaneous matters.

Senate

Introduced and read a first time	12/03/13
Second reading moved	12/03/13

A Bill for an Act to enable the citizens of Australia to initiate legislation for the holding of a referendum in relation to altering the Constitution, and for related purposes

6th April 2013

<https://senate.aph.gov.au/submissions/pages/index.aspx>

Committee Secretary Senate Standing Committees on Finance and Public Administration

Dear Committee,

I am writing to support this bill. I believe that I (and we as Australians) have very little say in our government and the rulings that are conducted by "THIS PLACE". I need more say in my democracy. We the Australian people need more say in our democracy. We are a laid-back nation whose people hardly ever "do anything about" concerns or problems - but we ALL grumble, whine and complain about what is going on politically. When 500 people turn out to a march or protest it should be seen as a mass of 50 000 or 500 000! Possibly 1 in a 100, probably it is 1 in 1000 who ever act on their political concerns or convictions.

It is about time that we have a legitimate avenue to have a say in our laws other than talk-back radio, letters to the editor and the newest avenues of media – twitter, facebook, flickr, on-line voting, galaxy polls - phone surveys etc. These of course do not PROVIDE CHANGE – just opinion of the few!

1. I wholeheartedly support this Bill. I am excited to hear that commonsense will prevail and that we will follow successful countries like Switzerland rather than the dysfunctional US and UK systems and policies.
2. I consider that for this system to work there needs to be 4 days every year as in Switzerland. (Adopt successes –things that work well.) One day every four years is unreasonable. It means that if the deadline is missed, it could be eight years from the start of the process until the matter is put to a referendum – this is ludicrous.
3. I have heard that many more than the total membership of any political party that currently has all the say on what legislation is tabled in our Parliament will be expected as the number of signatures. 1% of voters which is approximately 145,000 voters - is preposterous. It appears that the system is being set up to fail. (Don't waste our time – the details need to be rational and expected to succeed.)
4. I consider that 13 months to collect signatures to a Petition is insufficient and propose that two years would be more appropriate.
5. In discussion on the “application fee” I consider it to be completely unnecessary and that the population have a RIGHT to make these submissions without a fee attached. If a suggestion of a fee is at all necessary, it should be prescribed in the legislation, that it should be expressed as a multiple of Female Total Average Weekly Earnings (FeMTAWE) (so that it remains appropriate over time for the half of the population that continue to have little say or influence in Government, Justice and Law)!! *Why is there no such thing when half the population fall into this category!!! Australia is egalitarian, the reality is that there continues to be great disparity in incomes. Women earn half of what men do!!!! SHAME!*
I consider it to be appropriate that the fee be *refunded* if the referendum is successful on the basis that the proposer has obviously performed a public service to the good people of Australia.

Yours sincerely,
