



THE SENATE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE ARTS

10 June 2010

Hon Kevin Rudd MP
Prime Minister of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

Thankyou for your office's letter of 10 May 2010, effectively declining my invitation for you to appear to give evidence to the Senate Environment, Communications and the Arts References Committee's inquiry into the Government's Energy Efficient Homes Package, and the Home Insulation Program in particular.

The Committee asks that you re-consider your earlier decision, and choose to appear before the Committee in advance of its reporting on 22 June 2010, for reasons and on the basis of subsequent developments, set out below.

- On 27 May 2010 the Government released the last 3 of 4 letters Minister Garrett wrote to you in his capacity as Minister responsible, describing his concerns with the rolling out of the Home Insulation Program, together with your responses to the letters. The authors of the relevant letters (namely, you and Minister Garrett) are the most appropriate persons to answer questions about issues raised in and by those letters. The most appropriate forum to deal with those questions is a specially convened hearing of this Senate References Committee, before it concludes its inquiry.
- Fires continue in homes insulated under the Government's Home Insulation Program, and now number 158. There are fundamental questions about Government's plans and actions to prevent further fires and reassure affected residents, as well as their neighbours.
- In relation to inspections of insulated homes:
 - the Environment Committee heard, during Estimates on 27 May, that \$9 million has been spent inspecting 23,200 homes which must now be reinspected due to changed Government policy.
 - the Environment Committee further heard that only 140 of the 760 contractors required to undertake the inspections are available, leading to questions about the availability of a skilled, licensed and fully trained workforce to undertake the inspections.

- electrical contractors who have carried out some of the 23,200 inspections claim that their bills for the work undertaken have not been paid.
- The Committee Secretariat has now provided me with advice demonstrating some 19 occasions since 1987 upon which Ministers have appeared before a Senate Committee. These examples (list attached) are not exhaustive. They include appearances by Ministers from the House of Representatives, on four occasions. Whilst 'convention' may well be that the Senate doesn't compel Ministerial appearance, convention has also been that Ministers, including a number from the House of Representatives, nonetheless have appeared before Senate Committees.

I urge you to appear before the Committee in advance of its reporting on 22 June 2010, and would welcome arranging a mutually appropriate time.

I am writing to Ministers Gillard, Garrett and Combet in similar terms.

Yours sincerely

Mary Jo Fisher
Chair
Environment, Communications and the Arts References Committee



THE SENATE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE ARTS

10 June 2010

Hon Julia Gillard MP
Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and Social Inclusion
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

I am writing to invite you to appear to give evidence to the Senate Environment, Communications and the Arts References Committee's inquiry into the Government's Energy Efficient Homes Package, and the Home Insulation Program in particular.

The Committee asks that you to appear before the Committee in advance of its reporting on 22 June 2010, for reasons and on the basis of subsequent developments, set out below.

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I am writing to the Prime Minister in similar terms.

Yours sincerely

Mary Jo Fisher
Chair
Environment, Communications and the Arts References Committee



THE SENATE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE ARTS

10 June 2010

Hon Greg Combet MP
Minister Assisting the Minister for Climate Change and Energy Efficiency
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

Thankyou for your letter of 7 May 2010, effectively declining my invitation for you to appear to give evidence to the Senate Environment, Communications and the Arts References Committee's inquiry into the Government's Energy Efficient Homes Package, and the Home Insulation Program in particular.

The Committee asks that you re-consider your earlier decision, and choose to appear before the Committee in advance of its reporting on 22 June 2010, for reasons and on the basis of subsequent developments, set out below.

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Yours sincerely

Mary Jo Fisher
Chair
Environment, Communications and the Arts References Committee



THE SENATE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE ARTS

10 June 2010

Hon Peter Garrett MP
Minister for Environment Protection, Heritage and the Arts
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

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