

To the committee,

The ACT should have the power to instigate its own laws without the possibility of a veto from the federal government. The idea of the federal government holding so much power over a territory is ridiculous. There are two main points why. The current system is unfair, and that the federal politicians should not be allowed to interfere with the ACT's laws and policies because of their political agenda.

It is unfair that the people of the ACT have less rights in representation than other Australians. If one were to move from Tasmania to the ACT, one would lose representation in the Senate, and the right of a well functioning local government. The federal government treats the people of the territories like children, who can not make their own decisions. The fact that the States are in complete control of the laws that they pass, and territories are not, is plainly unfair. The people of the ACT are just as Australian as the people of NSW and therefore deserve the same rights to choose what laws to pass.

The ACT local government knows how to deal with local issues. The federal parliament does not. Simply put, local problems, local solutions. If the people of the ACT need an issue dealt with, the local government has the experience to make a well informed change. The current rules let politicians enforce their own agendas on the ACT. If the local government would like to make a change that is supported by the people of Canberra the rest of Australia can veto the law.

Tasmania has a quota of twelve Senate members. The ACT only has two. Tasmania can make its own laws without the fear of rejection, the ACT can not. Tasmania has a population of 495,000 and the ACT has a population of 351,000. The ACT is not six times smaller than Tasmania. The ACT does not have six times less industry than Tasmania. It is obvious that the ACT deserves more representation in the Senate. At least it deserves the right to be in control of the local government.

I am strongly in favour of passing the bill to give the ACT more independence by allowing it to pass laws without interference.

Markus Otting