



## **Australian Government**

Australian Government response to the  
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters report:

*Advisory report on the Commonwealth Electoral Amendment  
(Ensuring Fair Representation of the Northern Territory) Bill 2020*

MAY 2024

## **Introduction**

On 16 October 2020, the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters (JSCEM) tabled a report entitled *Advisory report on the Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Ensuring Fair Representation of the Northern Territory) Bill 2020*.

The Government's response to the recommendations of the Report follows below.

**Government Response to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters report: Advisory report on the Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Ensuring Fair Representation of the Northern Territory) Bill 2020.**

#	Recommendation	Government Response
1	<p>The Committee recommends that instead of the Senate proceeding with the Bill, the Government introduce a Bill to provide for a consistent floor of two seats for both the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory. As a consequence, the 2004 margin of error rule for the Territories should be repealed to provide consistency with the formula applying to the States. It further recommends that as part of a new Bill, the two Territories should also be subject to the same rules as each other in the process of redistributing boundaries between electorates, under Part IV of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>.</p>	<p><b><u>Noted</u></b></p> <p>The Government notes the recommendation. Given the passage of time, a substantive government response is no longer appropriate.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
2	<p>The Committee recommends that the Government review the existing provision of additional resourcing to MPs with large electorates, and consider whether further targeted resourcing would assist with representation by MPs of their constituents in these large electorates.</p>	<p>Refer to recommendation 1.</p>
3	<p>The Committee recommends that if the Parliament does not enact a two seat floor for the Territories, it considers instead either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ enacting a harmonic mean for allocating seats between States and Territories, with appropriate public explanation to build understanding for the reform, or</li> <li>▪ developing options for JSCEM to consider for additional Senate representation for the Northern Territory.</li> </ul>	<p>Refer to recommendation 1.</p>