



Appendix A

Standing orders

Current standing orders

Preparing a petition

204 What must be in a petition

A petition for presentation to the House must:

- a. be addressed to the House of Representatives;
- b. refer to a matter which is within the power of the House of Representatives to act on, that is, a Commonwealth legislative or administrative matter;
- c. state the facts which the petitioners wish to bring to the notice of the House; and
- d. contain a request for the House or the Parliament to take one or more specified actions.

205 How to prepare a petition

A petition must conform to the following requirements:

- a. It must be on paper.
- b. It must be legible.
- c. It must be in English or be accompanied by a translation certified to be correct. The person certifying the translation must place his or her name and address on the translation.
- d. The text of the petition must not contain any alterations.
- e. It must not have any letters, affidavits or other documents attached to it.
- f. The language used must be respectful, courteous and moderate. The petition must not contain irrelevant statements.

- g. The petition must not contain any indication that it has been sponsored or distributed by a Member of the House of Representatives. However to facilitate its lodgement, the petition may show the name and address of a Member as an address to which the petition may be sent for presentation to the House.
- h. A petition from a corporation must be made under its common seal. Otherwise it will be received as the petition of the individuals who signed it.

206 Rules about signatures

- a. Every petition must contain the signature and address of at least one person on the page on which the terms of the petition are written.
- b. All the signatures on a petition must meet the following requirements:
 - i. Each signature must be made by the person signing in his or her own handwriting. A petitioner who is not able to sign must make a mark in the presence of a witness. The witness must sign the petition as witness and write his or her address, and the name and address of the petitioner.
 - ii. Every signature must be written on a page bearing the terms of the petition, or the action asked for by the petition. Signatures must not be copied, pasted or transferred on to the petition or placed on a blank page on the reverse of a sheet containing the terms of the petition.

Presentation of petitions

207 Only a Member may lodge a petition for presentation

A petition for presentation to the House may only be lodged by a Member. A Member cannot lodge a petition from himself or herself.

208 Responsibilities of Members

- a. Before presenting a petition to the House a Member must:
 - i. write his or her name and electoral division at the beginning of the petition; and
 - ii. count the signatories and write the number of signatories at the beginning of the petition.
- b. If presenting a petition under *standing order 209(b) or (c)*, the Member must also obtain certification by the Clerk or Deputy Clerk that it complies with the standing orders.

209 Presenting a petition

A petition may be presented in one of three ways:

- a. The Clerk shall announce petitions on each sitting Monday, in accordance with *standing order 34 (order of business)*. A Member must lodge a petition with the Clerk by 12 noon on the Friday before the Monday on which it is proposed that the petition be presented.

- b. A Member may present a petition during the periods of Members' statements in the House, in accordance with *standing order 43*, and in the Main Committee, in accordance with *standing order 193*.
- c. A Member may present a petition which refers to a motion or order of the day when that motion or order of the day is moved or called on for the first time.

210 Petition to comply with standing orders

The Clerk or the Deputy Clerk must check that each petition lodged for presentation complies with the standing orders, and if the petition complies he or she shall certify the compliance on the petition.

211 Announcement of petitions and responses

- a. Following Question Time on each sitting Monday, the Clerk shall announce petitions and responses received. The announcement of petitions lodged for presentation shall state in each case:
 - i. the Member who lodged it;
 - ii. the identity and number of petitioners; and
 - iii. the subject matter of the petition.
- b. Following the announcement of petitions, the Clerk shall announce any ministerial responses to petitions previously presented.

Action on petitions

212 Petition referred to Minister for response

- a. After a petition is presented to the House, the Clerk must refer a copy of the petition to the Minister responsible for the administration of the matter raised in the petition.
- b. A Minister may respond to a petition by lodging a written response with the Clerk, who shall announce any ministerial responses in accordance with *standing order 211(b)*.

213 Action by the House

- a. Discussion on the subject matter of a petition shall only be allowed when it is presented during Members' statements, or when the notice or order of the day to which it relates is called on in accordance with *standing order 209 (c)*.
- b. Each petition presented shall be received by the House, unless a motion that it not be received is moved immediately and agreed to.
- c. The only other motion relating to a petition that may be moved is a motion on notice that the petition be referred to a particular committee.
- d. The terms of petitions and responses shall be printed in Hansard.

Proposed standing orders

Definitions

[insert in alphabetical order under standing order 2]

Petition is a formal request to the House to take an action that is within its competence to take. A petition for presentation to the House must comply with *standing orders* 204 to 208.

Petition terms consist of the reasons for the petition and the request for action by the House.

Preparing a petition

204 What must be in a petition

A petition for presentation to the House must:

- a. be addressed to the House of Representatives;
- b. refer to a matter on which the House has the power to act;
- c. state the reasons for petitioning the House; and
- d. contain a request for the House to take one or more specified actions.

205 Rules for petitions

A petition must conform to the following requirements:

- a. The terms of the petition must not contain any alterations and must not exceed 250 words. The terms must be placed at the top of the first page of the petition and the request of the petition must be at the top of every other page.
- b. The terms of the petition must not be illegal or promote illegal acts. The language used must be moderate.
- c. It must be in English or be accompanied by a translation certified to be correct. The person certifying the translation must place his or her name and address on the translation.
- d. No letters, affidavits or other documents should be attached to the petition. Any such attachments will be removed before presentation to the House.
- e. A petition from a corporation must be made under its common seal. Otherwise it will be received as the petition of the individuals who signed it.

206 Submitting a petition

- a. A petition may be submitted:
 - i. on paper; or
 - ii. electronically.
- b. Petitions may use the published proforma.

207 Electronic petitions

- a. An electronic petition is a petition for which persons may elect to indicate their support ('join the petition') by electronically providing their name and postcode and signifying their intention to join the petition.
- b. The posted period for an e-petition is to be a minimum of one week and a maximum of six months from the date of publication on the House's internet website.
- c. Once published on the House's website an e-petition cannot be altered.
- d. Only one e-petition dealing with substantially the same matter and requesting the same action by the House shall be published on the House's website at the same time.
- e. Once the posted period for an e-petition has elapsed, a copy of the petition shall be printed in full and presented to the House.
- f. Every electronic petition must contain the full name and address of the principal petitioner at the top of the petition.
- g. Names must not be copied, pasted or transferred on to an electronic petition.
- h. An e-petition may not be initiated after the dissolution of the House and until the first meeting of the new Parliament.

208 Rules about signatures

- a. Every petition on paper must contain the signature and full address of the principal petitioner on the first page of the petition.
- b. All the signatures on a paper petition must meet the following requirements:
 - i. Each signature must be made by the person signing in his or her own handwriting. Only a petitioner incapable of signing may ask another person to sign on his or her behalf.
 - ii. Signatures must not be copied, pasted or transferred on to the petition or placed on a blank page on the reverse of a sheet containing the terms of the petition.

Lodgement and presentation of petitions

209 Lodging a petition for presentation

- a. Petitions may be sent directly to the House or via a Member.
- b. A Member must not be a principal petitioner or signatory to a petition.

210 Presenting a petition

A petition may be presented in one of two ways:

- a. The Speaker shall present petitions and the Clerk announce them each sitting Monday, in accordance with *standing order 34 (order of business)*. Petitions must be lodged with the Table Office by 12 noon on the Friday before the Monday on which it is proposed that the petition be presented.
- b. A Member may present a petition during:
 - i. the periods of Members' statements in the House, in accordance with *standing order 43*, and in the Main Committee, in accordance with *standing order 193*;

- ii. adjournment debate in the House in accordance with *standing order 31*, and in the Main Committee in accordance with *standing order 191*; and
- iii. grievance debate in accordance with *standing order 44*.

Action on petitions

211 Petition referred to Minister for response

- a. After a petition is presented to the House, a copy of the petition may be referred to the Minister responsible for the administration of the matter raised in the petition.
- b. The Minister shall be expected to respond to a referred petition within 90 days of presentation by lodging a written response with the Clerk.
- c. The Clerk shall announce any ministerial responses to petitions previously presented. After the announcement, ministerial responses shall be published on the House's internet website.

212 Action by the House

- a. Each petition presented shall be received by the House, unless a motion that it not be received is moved immediately and agreed to.
- b. The only other motion relating to a petition that may be moved is a motion on notice that the petition be referred to a particular committee.
- c. The terms of petitions and responses shall be printed in Hansard.
- d. The Standing Committee on Petitions shall consider petitions and report any recommended actions to the House.

221a Standing Committee on Petitions

- a. A Standing Committee on Petitions shall be appointed to receive and process petitions, and to inquire into and report to the House on any action to be taken in response to them.
- b. The committee shall consist of seven members: four government and three non-government.

Form of a paper petition

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

This petition of certain citizens/residents of Australia:

Here select the word that applies

*draws to the attention of the House:

Here present a matter(reasons for the petition) on which the House has power to act, that is, a Commonwealth legislative or administrative matter

*We therefore ask the House to:

Here make a request for the House to take, or not take, a specific action

Note: the reasons and the request together comprise the terms of the petition and should be no longer than 250 words.

ADDRESS AND SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL PETITIONER

Here provide the full name and contact details of the principal petitioner

*Name: _____

*Address: _____

_____ *Postcode: _____

Email: _____ Telephone _____

SIGNATURE OF OTHER PETITIONERS

Here provide signatures of other petitioners

*Signature	Name	*Postcode
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

** indicates required field*

