



## MEDIA RELEASE

*2 pages*

Parliament of Australia  
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters

1 March 2001

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### CANBERRA ELECTORAL INTEGRITY HEARING

The Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters will continue the public hearing program for its inquiry into the integrity of the electoral roll in Canberra on tomorrow.

‘While the Committee will continue to collect evidence on the incidence of fraudulent enrolment, this hearing will also focus on the detection, investigation and prosecution of enrolment fraud cases,’ said Committee Chairman Mr Christopher Pyne MP (Member for Sturt). ‘The Committee will use the hearing to explore ways of improving the accuracy of the electoral roll by making it much harder for fraudulent enrolment to go undetected and unpunished.’

The Committee will take evidence from the Attorney General’s Department, Dr Amy McGrath and the Australian Federal Police.

Representatives of the Attorney General’s Department are expected to provide some background on Commonwealth fraud control procedures and how these apply to the electoral roll, as well as advising the committee about the appropriate level of penalties for fraudulent enrolment. Mr Pyne said: ‘Fraud control procedures are at the core of protecting the integrity of the electoral roll. It is vitally important that the Electoral Commission fraud control procedures are up to the job.’

Also appearing will be Dr Amy McGrath, a long standing critic of the Australian Electoral Commission. Dr McGrath is expected to discuss a number of the allegation of enrolment fraud she has made in her submissions to the inquiry. She will also be questioned on her proposal for an electoral Ombudsman to oversee investigations into fraudulent enrolment.

The Australian Federal Police are expected to be questioned on the adequacy of the current procedures for the detection and investigation of enrolment fraud. Of particular concern to the Committee is the level of priority accorded enrolment fraud in terms of detection and investigation by the AFP. The Committee will explore methods for ensuring that adequate resources are directed at the problem.

‘The priority for the Committee is to ensure public confidence in the accuracy of the electoral roll is restored,; said Mr Pyne.

The Committee is on schedule to table its report in June 2001.

Ends  
1 March 2001

**Further Information:** Christopher Pyne MP (Chair) 02 6277 4842 (Parl. House) 0419 391 435 (Mobile)  
Kevin Bodel (Inquiry Secretary) 02 6277 2374

**Hearing programs attached**

## INQUIRY INTO THE INTEGRITY OF THE ELECTORAL ROLL

### PUBLIC HEARING

**Date:** Friday 2 March 2001  
**Time:** 9.30 am – 2.00pm  
**Place:** House of Representatives Committee Room 1R3  
Parliament House, Canberra

**Witnesses:**

9.30 am – 10.45 am	Attorney General's Department
10.45 am – 11.00 am	Morning tea
11.00 am – 12.15 pm	Dr Amy McGrath
12.15 pm – 12.45 pm	Lunch
12.45 pm – 2.00 pm	Australian Federal Police

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### MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

Mr Christopher Pyne MP (Chair)  
Mr Laurie Ferguson MP (Deputy Chair)  
Senator Andrew Bartlett  
Senator the Hon. John Faulkner  
Senator Jeannie Ferris  
Senator Brett Mason  
Senator Andrew Murray  
Mr Robert McClelland MP  
Mr Stuart St Clair MP  
Hon. Alex Somlyay MP

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### INQUIRY INTO THE INTEGRITY OF THE ELECTORAL ROLL

On 23 August 2000 the Special Minister of State, Senator the Hon. Chris Ellison, asked the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters to examine the issue of the integrity of the electoral roll and fraudulent enrolment. At its meeting on 5 September the Committee agreed that in examining the matter it would look at the following.

That the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters inquire into and report on:

- the adequacy of the Commonwealth Electoral Act for the prevention and detection of fraudulent enrolment;
- incidents of fraudulent enrolment; and
- the need for legislative reform.

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### Further information:

**Christopher Pyne MP (Chair)**                      **02 6277 4842 (Parliament House) 08 8363 0666 (Electorate)**  
**Bev Forbes (Secretary)**                        **02 6277 4582**  
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