



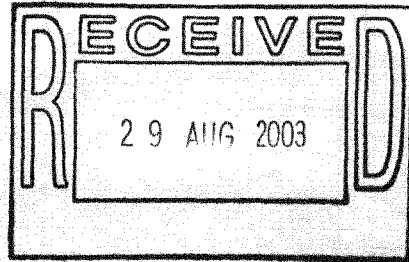
Jon Stanhope MLA

CHIEF MINISTER

ATTORNEY GENERAL MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

MEMBER FOR GINNINDERRA

The Hon Petro Georgiou MP
Committee Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Mr Georgiou

Thank you for your letter of 21 July 2003 inviting my government to make a submission to the inquiry by the Joint Standing Committee into Representation of the Northern Territory and the ACT in the House of Representatives.

My government supports the principle of "one vote, one value" with electorates containing as far as possible the same number of voters. At the same time I believe that there should be a degree of parity between the Northern Territory and the ACT.

The ACT currently has 2.4209 of a quota, entitling it to only two seats in the House of Representatives. The Northern Territory, which gained two seats at the 2001 election after getting just over 1.5 quotas, only just missed out on retaining its second seat under the current determination, with a quota of 1.4978. It will go back to only one seat at the next election.

Amending the Commonwealth Electoral Act to guarantee the ACT two seats is unlikely to have any practical benefit, as the ACT share of the quota is unlikely to slip back to 1.5, unless the size of the House of Representatives is substantially increased. On the other hand, I would like to see the people of the ACT guaranteed two seats in the House of Representatives so that small population shifts do not result in the loss of appropriate representation.

However, if the Northern Territory, with its smaller population, is guaranteed two seats in the House of Representatives then the ACT should be guaranteed three seats. This view is strengthened by the fact that the current ACT population is just under the 2.5 quotas necessary to gain a third seat.

I appreciate this opportunity to make a submission to your inquiry. This is an important issue about democratic representation of the people of this territory.

Yours sincerely

Jon Stanhope MLA
Attorney General
22 AUG 2003

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters	
Submission No.	23
Date Received	11/9/03
Secretary	

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