

25 NOV 2002



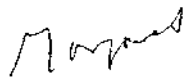
**THE HON TONY ABBOTT MP**

**MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**  
**Leader of the House of Representatives**  
**Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service**

PARLIAMENT HOUSE  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

18 NOV 2002

Mrs Margaret May MP  
Chair  
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mrs May 

Thank you for your letter of 19 August 2002 concerning the inquiry the Standing Committee on Procedure is conducting into the adequacy of House procedures for examining the estimates of expenditure in annual and additional appropriation bills.

I have considered the issues you raised in your letter and agree that any proposal should not duplicate the current Senate Estimates process.

I appreciate the desire of Members of Parliament to be more active in the scrutiny of Government measures but am not persuaded that opportunities for scrutiny (as opposed to the quality of that scrutiny) are currently inadequate. Government measures are currently scrutinised through Question Time in the House of Representatives and Senate, ordinary debate in both chambers, Senate Estimates, Parliamentary Questions on Notice and the media.

As you know, I am happy to consider ways to improve the functioning of the Parliament but believe that it is the quality rather than the quantity of debate and scrutiny which is the issue.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Abbott', written over a horizontal line.

TONY ABBOTT

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