

Committee Secretariat,  
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters.

## SUBMISSION TO THE ABOVE COMMITTEE FROM

1. Input of voters in forming legislation. In a Democracy the will of the majority is a paramount principle. The means by which such will is communicated by a voter to the Australian Parliaments appear to be random, and in many instances are conveyed via lobbyists and minority group spokespersons who may not reflect the view of the majority. Referenda are considered to be the fairest means by which voters can express their views. However Parliamentarians often claim that the cost of Referenda is a factor limiting the use of this procedure. Australia has had only about 19 Referenda in the 104 years of its Federation.

2. Switzerland has the answer. Arguably the world's longest continuing Democracy, the Switzerland Government invites its citizens to express their views on various political matters in an average of 4 Referenda per annum. What is more, the Swiss have now developed secure online electronic voting for these Referenda. The advantages are not only in lowered costs but the electronic media delivers a rapid result in stark contrast to the laborious and time-consuming vote-counting methods currently employed. I understand that the ACT offers the option of electronic voting in its Parliamentary Elections, thus resulting in a mixed form of voting methods. The advantage of electronic voting is diminished unless all votes are cast by that method.

I submit to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters that Parliament give consideration to the introduction of electronic voting and that only this method be employed in conducting Referenda more frequent than heretofore.

Warwick D. Young, address as above.