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The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

# Register of Members' Interests – consideration of proposal by a Member

House of Representatives  
Committee of Privileges and Members' Interests

December 2018  
Canberra

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## Membership of the committee

Chair Mr Ross Vasta MP

Deputy Chair Mr Pat Conroy MP

### Members

Hon Kevin Andrews MP

Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP

Mr Andrew Giles MP

Mr Ian Goodenough MP

Ms Nola Marino MP

Mr Ted O'Brien MP

Hon Warren Snowdon MP (nominee of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition)

Hon Wayne Swan MP

Mr Trent Zimmerman MP (nominee of the Leader of the House)

## Committee secretariat

Secretary and Registrar of Members' Interests	Ms Claressa Surtees
Research Officer	Mr Peter Banson
Administrative Officer	Ms Laura Gillies

## **Introduction**

1. Under the provisions of standing order 216 by which the Committee is established, the Committee is required to consider proposals by Members and others on the form and content of the Register of Members' Interests (SO 216(a)(iii)).
2. In this report the Committee considers a proposal by a Member to amend the resolutions of the House which state the requirements for the registration of Members' interests.

## **Proposed amendment to resolutions for the registration of Members' Interests**

3. Ms Cathy McGowan MP, Member for Indi, wrote to the Committee, on 14 November 2018, proposing an alteration to the resolutions to allow Members to select the term 'partner' in preference to the term 'spouse'. Ms McGowan stated that the term 'partner' more accurately reflected her personal circumstances when completing the statement and notifications of alterations, of Members' interests.

## **Conclusions of the Committee**

4. The Committee considers that the language used in the resolutions, including the term 'spouse', is largely reflective of the form used in 1984

when the first resolution in relation to the registration of Members' interests was adopted by the House. The Committee acknowledges that in contemporary adult relationships 'partner' is a term which is commonly used.

5. The Committee concludes that to avoid misunderstandings, the term used in the resolutions to describe the Member's relationship should be amended to 'spouse/partner'.

## **Recommendation**

The Committee recommends that the resolutions for the registration of Members' interests be amended by replacing the term 'spouse' with 'spouse/partner', wherever occurring.

MR ROSS VASTA MP  
Chair  
December 2018