

From: Bryan Gaensler
Sent: Wednesday, 12 June 2002 8:07 AM
To: JSCEM@aph.gov.au

Subject: Submission

From: Bryan Gaensler

Message:

To: The Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee
on Electoral Matters
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

To whom it may concern,

This submission is in response to the JSCEM's invitation for public comment as part of its Inquiry into the Conduct of the 2001 Federal Election.

I am currently enrolled to vote in the Federal electorate of Bradfield. However, I reside in the United States, and find it difficult to vote within the current constraints. My two main objections are as follows.

First, the nearest Australian consulate to me, located in New York City, typically only obtains its voting forms a couple of days before the election. By the time the forms arrive in the mail, it is already election day and it is physically impossible for me to get my vote in before the required date. I realise that the New York consulate maintains polling booths and that one can vote in person. However, New York is 5 hours drive away and such a visit is not normally practical.

Second, I find it difficult to maintain my correct information on the Electoral Roll. I am enrolled at my last address in Australia, being my father's address in St Ives, NSW. My father recently moved house, and I was told that the only way I could stay on the electoral roll was to return to Australia, fill out a change of address form, and then re-enrol as an overseas voter. This seemed unnecessarily complicated for a simple change in address (within the same electorate), and took some time to sort out.

I might make a final comment that I am concerned about ultimately being disenfranchised once the time allowed as an overseas voter expires. I maintain continuous contact with Australian issues and concerns, and regularly return home for visits. I thus

feel that I have as much right to vote as any
Australian citizen.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Bryan Gaensler