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From: Lara Cummings [laracummings@yahoo.com]  
Sent: Thursday, 15 May 2008 12:46 AM  
To: Committee, EM (REPS)  
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Subject: Submission

From: Lara Cummings  
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Message:

To: The Committee Secretary, JSCEM

Dear Sir,

Please accept this submission for the JSCEM's Inquiry into the 2007 Federal Election.

I'm an Australian citizen who's lived abroad for 8 years, from the Bennelong electorate, NSW, who unlike the expatriate citizens of the U.S, France and many other democracies, have been disenfranchised by my country for 5 years.

I visit my family in Australia yearly, and maintain interest in Australian politics and current affairs; I have the intention to return in future. The Australian elections directly affect my family and my own country of citizenship. Therefore I ask that the 3 year limit on voting from overseas be repealed and that citizens of Australia living overseas who wish to vote, may do so indefinitely. Other than maintaining an interest in domestic affairs, Australian citizens abroad are witness to Australia's greater place in world affairs which is beneficial to the country at large.

The American Democrats Abroad is a good example of the political interest in expatriate citizens maintain in their countries. It gives that party's members a voice and a forum for debate and information sharing, but also functions as it's own state with the voting weight of such.

By disenfranchising its own citizens, Australia is institutionally alienating them. Please reconsider, and encourage participation.

Sincerely,  
Lara Cummings