

***Public hearing: Canberra 11 August 2006***

The National Capital: a civic attraction, but only for some

The National Capital Educational Tourism Project (NCETP) will appear before the Electoral Matters Committee tomorrow (11 August) to talk about its efforts to increase student visits to the National Capital.

The NCETP has submitted that the nation's history, values and treasures can be easily accessed through national institutions such as Parliament House and the War Memorial, and that a visit to Canberra brings these institutions alive for school students.

Committee Chairman Peter Lindsay (Member for Herbert, Qld) said "the Committee is very concerned about the access of primary and secondary school students from remote and rural areas of Australia to Canberra".

"Students in Warburton (WA), for example, have a great deal less opportunity than students in Sydney to come to Canberra and see what our democratic institutions actually look like," Mr Lindsay said. "It's vital that as much assistance as government can provide is made available to those in remote areas."

The Committee will also hear from the ACT Electoral Commission and the ACT Legislative Assembly about their work in promoting civic and electoral awareness in the Canberra community.

The inquiry has received over 100 submissions from a broad range of individuals and organisations, including teachers and schools, Federal, state and territory parliaments and electoral commissions, academics and governments. Copies of these submissions are available on the Committee's website.

The Committee is a Joint Committee of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and comprises members of the Government, Opposition and the Australian Democrats.

Public hearing in Committee Room 2R1, Parliament House on Monday 7 August 2006

- 9:00am **National Capital Educational Tourism Project (Sub 51)**
- 9:45am **Civil Liberties Australia (Sub 53)**
- 10:15am **Elections ACT (Sub 83)**
- 11:00am **Dr Bede Harris (Sub 4)**
- 11:30am **Democratic Audit of Australia (Sub 41)**
- 1:00pm **Speaker of the ACT Legislative Assembly (Sub 14)**

The public hearing will be webcast live on <http://www.aph.gov.au/live/webcast3.asp>
It will be also broadcast internally on HMS 11 and on radio 98.3FM.

For media comment: Please contact the Committee Chair, Mr Peter Lindsay MP on (02) 6277 4964 (Canberra) or (07) 4725 2066 (Townsville), or by mobile on 0419 656 234.

Further information: contact the Inquiry Secretary (02) 6277 4453, by mobile on 0411 440 490, email jscem@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee's webpage at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/em/>