



7 July, 1999

The Honourable Bob Charles MP
Chairman
Joint Select Committee on the Republic Referendum
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Charles,

Long Title

We have considered the very useful discussion with your Committee earlier this week and noted the concern expressed in the hearing, and outside it, at the proposed omission of the words "republic" and "president".

As I said in my evidence our concern is simply to ensure that the long title fairly describes the nature of the amendment proposed and, in particular, flags the key and central issue; namely the replacement of the Queen with an Australian citizen as Australia's head of state. The suggestion that the Australian **Republican** Movement is running away from the word "republic" is ridiculous. Our slogan has been, for years, "A resident for President." Our objective is to ensure that voters are left in no doubt as to what the "republic" they are being asked to vote for actually involves.

In any event, in the interest of meeting these concerns we would propose the following set of words as a revised long title..

"A Bill for an Act to alter the Constitution to provide for a republic with an Australian President to replace the Queen as Australia's Head of State, and, following consideration of nominations submitted by the people, to be appointed with the approval of a two-thirds majority of a joint sitting of both Houses of the Commonwealth Parliament."

By way of comparison the currently proposed long title is 33 words long. The revised long(er) title above is still a concise 55 words long. There is clearly a delicate balance between adequately summarising the Bill and being concise, a matter we discussed with your Committee.

Yours faithfully,

Malcolm Turnbull
Chairman

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