

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS**

Report tabling – 2001 Federal Election Report

Embargoed until 1:05pm, Monday 23 June 2003

Wide Ranging Recommendations of the Report on the 2001 Election

The Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters released today coincides with the 20th anniversary of the Electoral Matters Committee and its predecessor, the Electoral Reform Committee.

Since 1983 these Committees have reviewed the conduct of every federal election, making recommendations to improve electoral law and practice in Australia.

Senator Robert Ray, who was on the original Electoral Reform Committee in 1983, is also a member of the Committee on its 20th anniversary.

The Committee's unanimous report makes 34 recommendations. In addition to its recommendations relating to strengthening requirements for proof of identity and address for enrolment, the Committee's recommendations include:

- Improving electoral procedures relating to homeless persons so that they are better able to exercise their right to vote (Recommendation 7);
- Liberalising the overseas elector provisions so that more expatriate Australians are able to enrol to vote from overseas (Recommendations 4-6);
- Establishing an internet enquiry facility whereby electors can verify their own enrolment details (Recommendation 28);
- Preventing the electoral roll being available for sale (Recommendation 29);
- Requiring the AEC to report to the Committee on all cases of overseas donations (Recommendation 33);
- Increasing the penalty for accepting an anonymous donation above the amounts specified in the Act to double the sum received through the anonymous donation (Recommendation 32);
- Precluding people who have generally been known by a legally registered name for 12 months from being denied the ability to enrol and nominate under that name on the grounds that it is "fictitious" or "frivolous" under the Act (Recommendation 11).

The report also foreshadows the Committee's desire for a more focussed enquiry into the AEC's administration and funding.

The Committee believes that the implementation of its unanimous recommendations will result in significant improvement in Australia's electoral processes.

For Press comment please contact Electoral Matters Chair, Petro Georgiou, MP on 02 6277 4419; For further information, Russell Chafer, Committee Secretary on 02 6277 4564. See additional release, "Unanimous Report on 2001 Election Recommends Major I.D. Reforms".

Copies of the Report are available near the press boxes [note embargoed until 1:05pm Monday 23 June 2003] and will be available from 1:05pm on the Committee website at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/em/elect01/index.htm