

Submi ssi on No 40

From: Robert Fleming  
Sent: Thursday, 1 May 2008 6:13 PM  
To: Committee, EM (REPS)

Subj ect: Submi ssi on

Message:

To: The Committee Secretary, JSCEM

Dear Sir,

Please accept this submission for the JSCEM's Inquiry into the 2007 Federal Election. It is of very significant concern to me to discover the extent to which ex-patriot Australians have seemingly become disenfranchised from the electoral process at home. As a Tasmanian with a very great interest in the politics at home at local, state and federal level, I took every effort to ensure I was able to participate in last year's federal election, despite having lived in London for over three years now. I was enrolled before I left, and checked before hand to ensure my enrollment was current. I am living abroad out of necessity due to a lack of opportunities within my sector back in Australia (museums and culture), and hope the invaluable experience I have gained overseas, can one day soon be transferred back to Australia when I have an opportunity to return.

As such I very clearly still have a very close interest in the affairs of Australian politics. I am quite sure many of the Australians who have been unable to participate due to disenfranchisement have similar feelings, and are probably quite disappointed not to be able to affect the outcome of their own constituency as they may wish, and as citizens is their democratic right to do. It should be noted by your committee that many Australian's leave for opportunities overseas not out of choice, but out of a desire to pursue their dreams and careers in ways that are not given to them in Australia. It should also be noted that after periods of a few years, many of them wish to, and do return, bringing back into the country new skills and abilities taken from overseas that can be then utilised to share with others and help advance Australia.

I am very much hoping this is the case for myself. I am hoping the skills I have learned in the UK will stand me in good stead to gain employment in my very competitive sector back home sometime very soon, and I have no real interest in UK politics other than how it affects my day to day affairs whilst I am here. But I have a very real interest in how my country is being governed in my absence. I would have been very disappointed not to have had that opportunity. Thank you very much for giving me the chance to air my feelings on the subject, and for considering my thoughts. Good luck with the enquiry, and remember Australians all over the planet still call Australia home, and care very much for their own country. Kind regards,

Robert Fleming  
Curator of Fine and Decorative Art,  
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