

Read, Shane (REPS)

From: Caroline Bissey [cariebi@yahoo.com.au]
Sent: Wednesday, 26 June 2002 4:09 PM
To: JSCEM@aph.gov.au
Cc: cariebi@yahoo.com.au
Subject: Submission

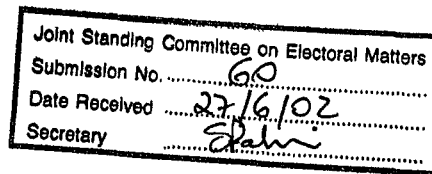
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Message:

To: The Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee
on Electoral Matters
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia



Dear Sir,

This submission is in response to the JSCEM's invitation for public comment as part of its Inquiry into the Conduct of the 2001 Federal Election.

I have been away from Australia for about 9 months, first living in France for 3 months and now in live in Belgium. I come from the Federal Electorate of Adelaide.

I still have family in Australia, who I speak to on a regular basis through letters and telephone calls.

I have access to the internet at home and I access Australian media sites at least once a day.

I voted in the 1999 Referendum on the Republic, as I was still in Australia at the time. However, I didn't vote in the last Federal Election, as I had been removed from the Electoral roll.

I was removed from the Electoral Roll when I went to my local Australian Electoral Commission office in Adelaide. I wasn't not sure what the process would be or what my options were.

When I went into the office I said to the lady there that I was moving overseas. She then asked when I was moving and for how long for. After answering her questions, she told me that she would remove me from the electoral list and that if I ever came back to Australia I would have to re-entrol.

I was not aware that I could register as an overseas elector and she never explained to me that I could. It has only been recently, through the web site of the Southern Cross Group that I have learnt that I can still be enrolled whilst living overseas.

I feel everybody has the right to vote, and at the moment I am a person who has no say anywhere.

With the age of the internet people can access information instantly from anywhere in the world, and I feel I know just as much about the events in Australia as any Australian still living there.

I feel all Australians living overseas should be given the opportunity to vote if they so choose, and this right should not have a time limit of six years before they have to re-enrol again.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline Bissey