



INQUIRY INTO THE CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Committee appointed to inquire into
constitutional recognition of local government**

The Parliament has appointed a Committee to inquire into changing the Australian constitution to provide for the financial recognition of local government. Following the findings of an independent expert panel, the Committee has been charged with investigating the potential success of a referendum on this issue.

‘This inquiry builds on the extensive consultation conducted by the expert panel. Our task is to establish the likelihood of success of a referendum on financial recognition of local government,’ Committee Chair Michelle Rowland said.

The expert panel’s preferred amendment would be to Section 96 of the Constitution which would read (proposed new words in italics):

The Parliament may grant financial assistance to any State *or to any local government body formed by State or Territory Legislation* on such terms and conditions as the Parliament sees fit.

‘The Committee’s final members were appointed on 28 November 2012, and the Committee held its first meeting on 29 November 2012 and immediately decided to call for submissions. The Committee is keen to hear from stakeholders on the proposed amendment, and especially its wording. We welcome submissions on the amendment, as well as other issues related to the expert panel’s proposal.’ Committee Chair Michelle Rowland said.

‘The appointment of this Committee is a sign that the Parliament is concerned to progress this issue in a way that would provide any referendum with the best chance of success. The Committee will be meeting with state governments and local government representatives to assess the best way forward.’

The full terms of reference are available on the Committee’s website at www.aph.gov.au/jsclg and submissions addressing the terms of reference must be received by 15 February 2013.

All submissions made to the expert panel are available to the Committee and will be considered as part of the inquiry.

For media comment: contact the Chair’s media advisor, Nick Trainor on 0407 078 138.
For information on the inquiry: contact the Secretariat on (02) 6277 4044 or, by email:
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