

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to make a submission to your Committee regarding the 2010 federal election. My thanks goes to Kirsten Livermore, my former federal member of parliament, for drawing my attention to the existence of your Committee.

Main point:

That the Committee consider ways and means of enfranchising ex-patriate Australians to enable them to vote in future federal election.

My argument in brief:

- 1/ I am a naturalised Australian citizen, resident in Australia from 1979-29 March 2010 incl.
- 2/ I am in receipt of State Government pensions from NSW and Queensland, which continue to be paid into my long held Queensland bank account.
- 3/ I am also a long term Australian stockmarket investor, and interest and dividends from these shareholdings also remain being paid into my Queensland bank account.
- 4/ I have voted in every Australian election since my naturalisation, apart from the 2010 election.
- 5/ The reason I did not vote in the 2010 election is that I left Australia on 29 March 2010 to settle in Christchurch, New Zealand, and was therefore unable to vote, according to current Australian federal electoral laws.
- 6/ Further to Points 2 and 3 above, despite not being permitted to vote, I remain an Australian taxpayer.
- 7/ I do not consider this situation to be either fair or naturally just.

Further points in support of the above:

1/ See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian\\_diaspora](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_diaspora) (accessed 6 Feb 2011)  
According to Wikipedia, there are approximately one million ex-patriate Australians, representing somewhere near 5% of the total population. This same source noted, *inter alia*, "In 2005 [Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee \(a standing committee\)](#) reported into the issue of Expatriate Australians and made recommendations that the "Australian Government needs to make greater efforts to connect with and engage our expatriate community".<sup>[12]</sup>" Considering ways and means to permit ex-patriate Australians to vote in federal and/or State elections would go a long way towards meeting this recommendation.

2/ Other countries make provision for their ex-patriate citizens to vote, why can't Australia?  
A quick and cursory search of the Web using Google showed, for instance, the Republics of Yemen (<http://www.scer.org.ye/english/expatriatesmanual.htm>, accessed 6 Feb 2011), and Turkey ([http://www.worldbulletin.net/news\\_detail.php?id=63820](http://www.worldbulletin.net/news_detail.php?id=63820), accessed 6 Feb 2011), make provision for their ex-patriate citizens. Perhaps of more relevance to Australia, something like half a million UK citizens have been enfranchised since 1987 - see [http://wapedia.mobi/en/Representation\\_of\\_the\\_People\\_Act\\_1985](http://wapedia.mobi/en/Representation_of_the_People_Act_1985) (accessed 6 Feb 2011).  
If the UK can do it, why can't Australia?

3/ It would be great if Federal Parliament saw fit to actively address this matter prior to the next federal election.

Many thanks to you for considering this submission.

Peter Hallinan