



ELECTORAL MATTERS COMMITTEE

PUBLIC HEARING WITH AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRATS

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**MEDIA ALERT**

*Issued: 20 August 2001*

## **ATT: National Media**

PUBLIC HEARING ON TUESDAY 21 AUGUST 2001

# **DEMOCRATS TO DISCUSS POLITICAL DONATIONS**

The Australian Democrats will appear before the Electoral Matters Committee's first hearing of the Electoral funding and disclosure inquiry on Tuesday.

The scope of the inquiry expanded significantly two weeks ago when the Australian Electoral Commission alleged, amongst other things, that both donors and political parties are abandoning the clear intent of disclosure scheme, and that the Electoral Act is not adequate to prevent this.

'The Committee will be particularly interested in hearing the Democrats' views on these allegations,' Mr Pyne said. 'The Committee is taking these allegations very seriously, and the views and experiences of political parties like the Democrats will assist the Committee in deciding if serious reform is required.'

In addition, the Committee will explore a number of Democrats funding and disclosure recommendations at the hearing, including:

- a cap on the amount of money that can be donated to a party;
- effective transparency requirements for trusts and foundations that donate to political parties;
- a ban on overseas donations;
- the immediate disclosure of all donations over \$10,000; and
- a significant tightening of the party registration requirements to ensure parties are democratic.

The Democrats' own fundraising activities are also expected to be examined.

The Committee will continue hearings with other political parties in August and September.

Ends // 20 August 2001

### **To arrange comment:**

Christopher Pyne MP (Chair)

02 6277 4842 (Parliament House)

08 8363 0666 (Electorate)

### **Further information:**

Kevin Bodel (Inquiry Secretary)

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PARLIAMENT HOUSE  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

**Date:** Tuesday 21 August 2001  
**Time:** 12.30 pm – 2.00 pm  
**Place:** House of Representatives Committee Room 2R2  
Parliament House, Canberra

**Witnesses:** The Australian Democrats  
Senator Andrew Murray  
Senator Andrew Bartlett

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## **MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE**

Mr Christopher Pyne MP (Chair)  
Mr Daryl Melham MP (Deputy Chair)  
Senator Andrew Bartlett  
Senator the Hon. John Faulkner  
Senator Jeannie Ferris  
Senator Brett Mason  
Senator Andrew Murray  
Mr Michael Danby MP  
The Hon. David Jull MP  
Mr Stuart St Clair MP

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## **INQUIRY INTO ELECTORAL FUNDING AND DISCLOSURE**

In August 2000 the Special Minister of State, Senator the Hon. Chris Ellison, requested the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters inquire into those recommendations of the Australian Electoral Commission's 1996 and 1998 Funding and Disclosure Reports not currently incorporated in legislation or not previously examined by the Committee. The Committee will report on the desirability of incorporating the remaining AEC funding and disclosure recommendations into the existing legislation.

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