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## **Electoral Matters Committee supports direct update of elector addresses**

Federal Parliament's Electoral Matters Committee has released its advisory report today on a Bill that will give the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) the power to directly update the address details of people on the Commonwealth electoral roll.

There are 1.5 million eligible Australians missing from the roll. The AEC estimates 600 000 of those had previously been on the roll. Some of these people will have moved house and failed to update their address details with the AEC. As a result they can be removed by the AEC under the objection process.

The changes proposed in the Electoral and Referendum Amendment (Maintaining Address) Bill 2011 give the AEC the power to extend its Continuous Roll Update process to directly update the addresses of enrolled electors. It only relates to people already on the roll. When the AEC receives information from a third party it regards as reliable, it can use the information to update the person's address details. To complement this new power, the Bill also provides the AEC with greater discretion in the objection process. The AEC would be able to update address details rather than remove people from the roll.

The committee considered three key issues in relation to the Bill; the requirement to enrol and update details, using data from other agencies for roll management, and privacy concerns.

The committee recommended that Parliament pass the Bill. It concluded that the measures proposed in the Bill were appropriate and necessary to help improve the completeness and accuracy of the Commonwealth electoral roll.

The report is available on the committee's website at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/em>

It includes a dissenting report from Coalition committee members.

**For media comment:** Please contact the Committee Chair, Daryl Melham MP on 02 6277 2054 (Parliament House office) or 02 9774 2111 (Electoral office).

**For general information:** Contact the secretariat on 02 6277 2374 or [jscem@aph.gov.au](mailto:jscem@aph.gov.au).