

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS****Inquiry into representation of the Territories in the House of Representatives**

Should the NT and ACT have a guaranteed minimum of two Members each in the House of Representatives?

PUBLIC HEARING - CANBERRA

Federal Parliament's Electoral Matters Committee is holding a public hearing in Canberra this Thursday, 18 September, to take further evidence for its inquiry into the representation of the Territories in the House of Representatives.

The Committee is examining whether the *Commonwealth Electoral Act* should be amended to provide for a minimum of two seats each in the House of Representatives for the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory. This follows the recent determination by the Australian Electoral Commission that the Northern Territory's entitlement will reduce from two House of Representatives seats to one for the next federal election.

The hearing will be held in Committee Room 2S1 at Parliament House, commencing at 8.45am. It is expected that witnesses will include:

- The Australian Bureau of Statistics
- The Australian Electoral Commission
- The Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Australian National University

The Chair of the Electoral Matters Committee, Mr Petro Georgiou MP (Member for Kooyong, Vic) said: "The Committee is holding another public hearing in Canberra to explore issues raised in submissions received by the Committee since its first public hearing as well as issues raised at the previous public hearing in Darwin.

"These issues predominantly concern the methods used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics to estimate the population of Australia, in particular the population of the Northern Territory, and the process adopted by the Australian Electoral Commission to determine state and territory entitlements in the House of Representatives."

The Committee expects to table its report in Parliament by the end of the year. Transcripts of the public hearings and submissions to the inquiry are available from the Committee's website.

For media comment, please contact:

Electoral Matters Committee Chair, Petro Georgiou MP, via (03) 9882 3677

For further information on the inquiry:

Frances Gant, Inquiry Secretary on (02) 6277 4209, or visit http://www.aph.gov.au/house_territories

The members of the Electoral Matters Committee are:

Mr Petro Georgiou MP (*Chair*) (Liberal Party of Australia, Kooyong, VIC)
Mr Michael Danby MP (*Deputy Chair*) (Australian Labor Party, Melbourne Ports, VIC)
Senator Andrew Bartlett (Australian Democrats, QLD)
Senator George Brandis (Liberal Party of Australia, QLD)
Senator Brett Mason (Liberal Party of Australia, QLD)
Senator Andrew Murray (Australian Democrats, WA)
Senator Robert Ray (Australian Labor Party, VIC)
Mr John Forrest MP (National Party of Australia, Mallee, VIC)
Mr Daryl Melham MP (Australian Labor Party, Banks, NSW)
Ms Sophie Panopoulos MP (Liberal Party of Australia, Indi, VIC)