



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs

Inquiry into older people and the law

MEDIA ALERT

Issued: 30 May 2007

Chairman: Peter Slipper MP

Public hearings and open forums on older people and the law

Have your say in Melbourne and Hobart 4-5 June

The question of how well the legal system meets the needs of Australians aged 65 years and over will be on the agenda of public hearings in Melbourne next Monday (4 June) and in Hobart next Tuesday (5 June).

The House of Representatives Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee will hear from a range of organisations and individuals in relation to its inquiry into older people and the law. Organisations appearing before the Committee include the Law Institute of Victoria, the Association of Independent Retirees, the Federation of Community Legal Centres Victoria, and the Aged Care Crisis Team.

"In previous public hearings in Canberra and Sydney, the Committee received some valuable evidence how the legal system deals with fraud and financial abuse against older people, the administration of power of attorney provisions, family agreements, discrimination, and barriers to older Australians accessing legal services. I look forward to further exploring these issues in Melbourne and Hobart," Committee Chairman Peter Slipper said.

Mr Slipper has also called for members of the public to have their say on older people and the law at an open public forum at both hearings. "Because many people may not have made submissions but might have thoughtful contributions to make, we have decided to have an open forum," Mr Slipper said. "So, when drawing together the threads of the inquiry and the results of our hearings, the committee will also be able to take into account what ordinary Australians are saying."

The public forum times at the Victorian and Tasmanian venues will be as follows:

- **Monday 4 June, 11:30am to 12:30pm** at the Sebel Albert Park, 65 Queens Rd, Melbourne; and
- **Tuesday 5 June, 11:00am to 12:00pm** at the Hobart Function and Conference Centre, 1 Elizabeth Street Pier, Hobart.

Both public hearings will commence at **9:30am** and are open to the public to observe. The Committee is not able to investigate individual cases or provide legal advice. Public hearings are also planned for other capital cities.

For media interviews:

Please contact the Committee Chairman, Peter Slipper MP on (07) 5443 3555 (electorate office) or on (02) 6277 4975 (Canberra).

Or Mr Slipper's media adviser, Richard Bruinsma, on 0417 486 673.

For background information, including the full terms of reference and copies of submissions, please contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 2358 or visit the inquiry website at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/laca/olderpeople/index.htm> .

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