

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS**

Public hearing: Inquiry into the 2007 election

*Chair: Daryl Melham**Deputy Chair: Scott Morrison*

Public hearings on proposals to improve the transparency of political donations

Federal parliament's Electoral Matters Committee will hold hearings next week as part of its inquiry into the Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Political Donations and Other Measures) Bill 2008.

"While the committee has already received some evidence relating to parts of the bill as part of its ongoing inquiry into the 2007 federal election, these hearings will allow the committee to examine the more technical aspects of the bill in greater detail", Daryl Melham, the Chair of the committee said.

The bill seeks to amend the Commonwealth Electoral Act to provide for a range of measures including:

- reducing the disclosure threshold from \$10 900 (current rate, CPI-indexed) to \$1000 and remove CPI indexation;
- prohibiting foreign and anonymous donations to registered political parties, candidates and members of Senate groups and also prevent the use of foreign and anonymous donations for political expenditure;
- introducing a claims system for electoral funding and tie funding to electoral expenditure;
- introducing a biannual disclosure framework in place of annual returns and reduce timeframes for election returns; and
- introducing new offences and increase penalties for a range of existing offences.

Hearing program

Monday 22 September

Committee Room 2R2

10.15am - Democratic Audit of Australia

11.30am - Close

Friday 26 September 2008

Committee Room 2R1

9.15am - Australian Electoral Commission and

Department of Finance and Deregulation

10.45am - Close

The public hearings will be broadcast on the House Monitoring Service, radio and webcast live on the Parliament House website at:

<http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

For media comment: please contact the Committee Chair, Daryl Melham, on (02) 6277 2054 (Parliament House Office).

Further information: contact the Inquiry Secretary (02) 6277 2374, email jscem@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee's webpage at <http://www.aph.gov.au/em>