

SUBMISSION 3

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Sent: Tuesday, 16 May 2006 2:10 AM

To: Committee, EM (REPS)

Subject: Submission to Inquiry into Civics and Electoral Education

The Secretary,
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters

As an expatriate Australian, I learned too late that my voting rights had been lost. I have lived in the US for over a decade, but when trying to register to vote on the Republican referendum I discovered that overseas electors had to stay actively enrolled if they have lived outside of Australia for more than 3 years.

I knew that voting for overseas Australian citizens is not compulsory, which is as it should be. However, when I left Australia, there was no information telling me how to keep my voting rights. The government could easily provide this information to people leaving Australia. It could be made available when filling out the immigration forms when leaving Australia. It could also be given to people applying to renew passports overseas. Since I had to visit Australian consulates to get passports for my children when they were born, I could also have been given this information then.

Yours sincerely