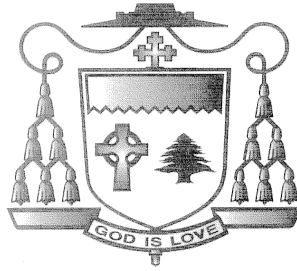


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Senate Subcommittee for the Arts, Environment and Communications
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



As a member of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Committee for the Media and as a long-standing Friend of the ABC, I wish to express my strong opposition to the move to abolish the position of Staff-elected Director of the ABC.

The ABC plays a critical role in our Australian society in being a truly independent voice in an environment where most of the media is owned and controlled by "Big Business" and vested interests. Witness the "hype" surrounding Kerry Packer's death and the power wielded by the Murdoch empire.

It would be ironic if the one elected member of the ABC is cast aside in favour of yet another Government appointee. For the ABC to remain truly independent it needs to be a "voice of the people", a role I feel is filled by the staff-elected director.

6 April 2006

Copy to Senator Helen Coonan
Minister for the Arts, Environment and Communications