

Dear Sir/Madam

We would like to make an individual submission to the Senate Enquiry on the issue of removing the position of staff-elected director from the ABC board.

We oppose the removal of a staff-elected director to the ABC board, and we oppose the proposed Australian Broadcasting Corporation Amendment Bill 2006.

A staff member is an essential part of a balanced broadcasting board, and the current and former staff-elected members have fulfilled a valuable function. They can bring a different perspective to that of other members and they maintain a high level of independence, in an environment where we understand that other board members are appointed by the Government, and hence are not independent.

A staff-elected director is essential to maintain the high standards of the ABC, including free public broadcasting without advertisements.

The erosion of the board as proposed by this amendment would, we fear, lead to the erosion of the high standards to which the ABC adheres.

If any amendment be considered, it should be to strengthen the independence of the board through board membership being determined by an independent and bi-partisan entity with more consumer representation - not by this regressive move.

Yours sincerely

Isolde Kauffman and Stephen Gray  
Ainslie, Canberra.