

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

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There has been wide acceptance of the desirability of ‘whistleblower’ legislation in Australia. The Commonwealth has lagged the States and Territories in introducing effective legislation. Consequently, the *Public Interest Disclosure Bill 2001* was introduced to provide legislative protection for people who make disclosures in the public interest.

This Bill provided an important opportunity for the Committee to consider the need for a legislative response to the inadequate whistleblower protection regime that exists at a Commonwealth level. The Committee has accepted that there is a strong and valid case for improvement in this area. It is now apparent that it is vital that legislative change be made to achieve a much better outcome.

Committee review offers the opportunity for informed analysis and improvement of legislation. From the outset, my view has been that if any aspects of the Bill required amendment to better serve their purpose, I would be supportive of any reasonable recommendations the Committee had along those lines. The Committee has made helpful and positive suggestions. Accordingly, I intend to carefully consider the conclusions of the Committee with a view to refining the bills.

I thank the Committee for the quality and depth of its consideration of this Bill.

Senator Andrew Murray

