

23 January 2009

The Secretary
Finance & Public Administration Committee
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Secretary,

Re: Plebiscite for an Australian Republic Bill 2008

In response to the invitation to make a submission on this bill, I wish to put the following to the Committee for its consideration:

1. There is only one way to change the constitution. This is a referendum. So why isn't it being used?
2. Details of the proposed republic are being kept secret. Surely we should know what is being planned before we vote.
3. The smaller states are not protected as in a referendum. For a referendum to pass, it must be approved by a national majority and also by a majority in at least four states. Some lawyers think a referendum on such a basic change would need to be approved in all states.
4. This plebiscite invites the people to reject the existing constitution without knowing what is to be put in its place.
5. If passed it will lead to a period of constitutional instability.
6. It will be costly, and add to the millions and millions already spent on various attempts to persuade the people to support a republic.
7. In 1999 every state and 72% of electorates said no to the republicans' preferred model.
8. Don't the republicans understand that No means No?

I would be grateful if you would acknowledge receipt of this submission.

Note: Please keep my postal and email address and phone number confidential.

Dr Michael Giffin TSSF