



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters

20 February 2012

Dr Roger Clarke
Chair
Australian Privacy Foundation
Email: Chair@privacy.org.au

Dear Dr Clarke

I note the concerns you raise in your letter of 17 February 2012 regarding the timetable for the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters' consideration of the Electoral and Referendum Amendment (Protecting Elector Participation) Bill 2012.

As the committee anticipates tabling its report on this bill in the sitting week commencing 19 March 2012, the submission deadline of 24 February and hearing date of 29 February 2012 have been scheduled accordingly.

While the bill is recently introduced, the subject matter is clear and is an issue that has been considered on many previous occasions by the committee and on which the committee has made recommendations. The objective of this review will be to investigate the adequacy of the bill in achieving its policy objectives.

While the committee has traditionally undertaken major inquiries that have spanned a number of months, the timeline set out for this inquiry is in keeping with inquiries of this nature. Senate committees, and increasingly House of Representatives committees, routinely conduct timely, targeted and effective consideration of proposed legislation.

You have indicated that due to timing constraints, representatives of the Australian Privacy Foundation (APF) may not be able to participate in the committee's review of this bill. The committee appreciates the contribution that the APF has already made on relevant issues to the committee's other inquiry into the Electoral and Referendum Amendment (Maintaining Address) Bill 2011, and in particular your efforts in appearing before the committee at its hearing on 15 February 2012. The committee will be able to take on board evidence you have already provided, where relevant to the matters under consideration for the new bill.

Yours sincerely



Daryl Melham
Chair