

Committee Secretary
Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Inquiry into Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Amendment (Disallowance and Amendment Power of the Commonwealth) Bill 2010

Dear Mr Secretary

I don't believe that this Bill should be supported. Speaking as a Territorian the bill will do nothing to achieve its aims in relation the Northern Territory being able to effectively manage its own laws like other Australians living in states of the Commonwealth.

The Northern Territory would remain an unequal partner in the Commonwealth. This is because the Commonwealth would retain the power to make laws for the Northern Territory under section 122, Laws that are, for the majority of Australians, ordinarily determined by local state parliaments.

The logical and fair path is to allow the Northern Territory to continue the path towards statehood that was begun when the commonwealth accepted the Northern Territory from South Australia back in 1911.

The Northern Territory has been funded and behaved like a state' ipso facto' for many years now and if the intention of the Act is to allow the Northern Territory to legislate for its citizens like any other state in Australia then our fellow Australian citizens must allow the course of the statehood debate to continue. The Northern Territory Parliament and people after years of consultation, debate and consideration have just released a report on the future direction of statehood for the Northern Territory. There is a proposed constitutional convention to be held by people of the Territory later this year that will outline the aspirations and directions that Australians living in the Northern Territory want for their future statehood. This should be the conduit for the Northern Territory becoming equal partners in the commonwealth with other Australians; this Bill does not achieve that.

The ACT is obviously in a different basket from the Northern Territory as it was created under a different part of the constitution and is the seat of government for our great Commonwealth so her path to equality to the states will be somewhat different from ours, however speaking as a Northern Territorian I don't think this Bill will assist our move towards statehood but would be merely be a distraction to process underway here at the moment, begun may years ago, that will eventually see us equal to other Australians living in this great commonwealth of ours.

Yours respectfully
Sean Parnell