

Committee Secretary
senate Legal and Constitutional Committees
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Dennett,

Due to the short notice to submit regarding this Bill combined with my having been traveling interstate, my submission is unduly brief. I would be grateful if you would accept further information from me on Monday 14 March.

Canberra is the national capital and belongs to all the people of Australia, not just the people of the ACT. To remove the executive power of the Government in relation to the ACT undermines the status of Canberra as the national capital.

As a long-term resident of Canberra, I recall that two referendums to grant self-government to the ACT failed, but we were given self-government anyway. I must however contend that we did not get self-government as the rest of the Australian people have. We have "Claytons' self-government, that is the self-government you have when you are not really having self-government. That Senator Brown, as a Tasmanian, has such an interest in the ACT is indicative of that; the Senator has not only one Bill on the ACT, he has at least three!

To further illustrate my contention, I would urge you to consider how little representation, three multiple-member electorates provide for the ACT citizen. Each voting citizen has either five or seven members to represent them. In practice this means that to gain the same representation as another Australian, an ACT citizen has to put in five or seven times the effort. Why not duplicate the same letter or email to the other four or six? Most serious matters, which cause us to beseech our representatives, require a personal visit to be effective. Conversely, this equates to a greater workload for ACT politicians, who must deal with the same approaches from all constituents, often duplicating the work of their colleagues, or ignoring them in the same fashion, if they so choose. These multiple-member electorates consequently undermine electoral responsibility, as each may claim it is some others' fault. How can the voters of the ACT shoot home this responsibility at subsequent elections if they cannot know who to attribute that responsibility to.

Yours faithfully,

Carolyn Parker