

Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
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Dear Sir

I write to provide this submission into the Committee's inquiry into the Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Amendment Bill 2022.

The landmark changes proposed by the government will be seen as a cynical ploy to help the yes case in the face of decades of procedure in referendum matters. This in turn will sabotage any chance of getting quiet Australians to vote yes.

When the electorate thinks that the government is changing long settled rules on how referendums are run then they will be suspicious and opt for the status quo by voting no to proposed changes. This is a big risk for the referendum questions being passed.

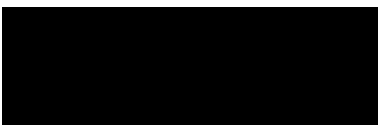
Voters will question why the government is not funding a neutral yes and no case. They will want to know why official yes and no pamphlets are being abolished by this Bill.

They will want to know why expenditure for the yes case will be tax deductible but not expenditure on the no case. They will see this as one sided and unfair.

Recognising Indigenous people in the constitution is well worth doing, but only if it's done in ways that don't damage the confidence of Australians in our system of conducting referendums.

This Bill does!

Thank you



Hon Peter Lindsay OAM

