

Submission to the Finance & Public Affairs Senate Committee - Citizen Initiated Referendum Bill 2013

I would like to congratulate Senator John Madigan on the tabling of this Bill in the Senate and I thoroughly support his efforts to provide a mechanism for the People Of Australia to have greater input into the decision making processes of our Government, a government that was brought forth by The Australian Constitution (1901). A constitution formulated for Australians, by Australians and that which maintains to be the SUPREME LAW of this great Nation.

- I ask the Senate to seriously reconsider the timing of the period in which referenda will take place. Four years is too great of a period between when the voice of the Australian People will be heard via referenda. This period needs to be reduced to a more appropriate annual occurrence as is the example led by the Swiss Government. This Bill not only “needs to work”, it needs to be “seen to be working” by the Australian People.
- The percentage of voters to initiate such a process resting at 1% is too great of a percentage. This in 2013 equates to approximately 145,000 people which is more than have the total membership of any / all political parties in Australia. A greater percentage than the current number of politicians and party members that currently determine what legislation is tabled in our Parliament.
- 13 months to collect signatures to a Petition is insufficient and I propose that two years would be more appropriate.
- I ask the Senate to remove any provision that an “application fee” be applied to this process as I believe that the Australian People are tired of the mentality of “a rule for the rich and a rule for the poor” and this would further be seen to be restricting people from our free democratic process that was put in place by the Writers of the Australian Constitution and our Forebears.

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