



Parliament of Australia

Speaker of the House of Representatives

President of the Senate

17 March 2021

Email: jcpaa@aph.gov.au

Mrs Lucy Wicks MP
Committee Chair
Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mrs Wicks,

Thank you for your letter dated 15th February 2021 regarding the recommendations of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit Report 482, *Review of Operations of Parliamentary Budget Office 2019-20*, and specifically drawing our attention to Recommendation 1 of the review.

Recommendation 1 of the report would require:

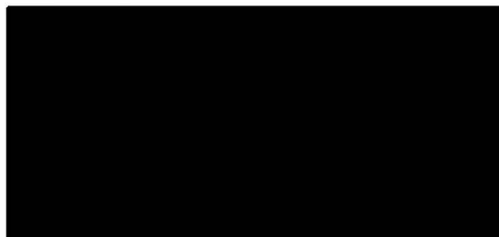
The Australian Government amend section 64T (1) of the Parliamentary Service Act 1999 (PS Act) to provide for an automatic referral process for independent review of the operations of the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO), to be completed within 9 months after the end of the caretaker period for a general election.

We support Recommendation 1 made by the Committee and note that the Parliamentary Budget Office was also supportive of this recommendation. Automatic referrals for an independent review process following a general election would provide certainty for the PBO, improve its planning capabilities, and ensure the PBO continues to fulfill its legislative mandate.

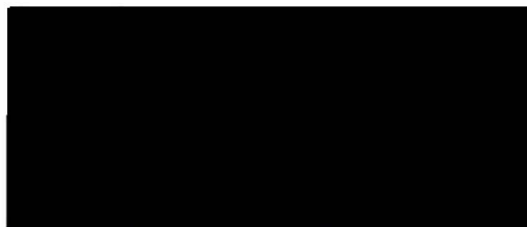
As stated in the Parliamentary Budget Officer's response to you dated 22nd December 2020, any actionable responses to Recommendation 1 would require legislative changes to the *Parliamentary Service Act* (1999), and as such, progress on this matter is now at the discretion of Government.

Thank you for raising this matter with us.

Yours sincerely,



THE HON TONY SMITH MP



SENATOR THE HON SCOTT RYAN