

Sir/Madam,

After appearing before the committee's hearing on Friday, November 12, I was asked to provide more information. The Hansard record shows Senator Deborah O'Neill said:

"Could I put one on notice? Given the uncertainty about the background of the Rule of Law Institute, could Mr Merritt provide us with a membership list and explain whether it's paid membership, by invitation or open to everybody? Could he clarify if Mr Stuart Clark, who he was scheduled to give evidence with, is a member of that organisation? Further, does he or his organisation, or do members of his organisation, have a formal business relationship with the US Chamber of Commerce Institute for Legal Reform, who have urged the government to enact the bill as soon as possible? Thank you, Chair."

The answers to the senator's questions are:

- 1) Membership of the Rule of Law Institute is not open to the public.
- 2) Mr Stuart Clark has no involvement with the Rule of Law Institute or associated entities.
- 3) The Rule of Law Institute and associated entities have no formal business relationship with the US Chamber of Commerce Institute for Legal Reform. Neither the Rule of Law Institute, its associated entities or myself have been engaged by the US Chamber of Commerce Institute for Legal Reform to attend these hearings to urge the government to enact the bill as soon as possible.

The Hansard record also shows that Mr Julian Hill asked:

"Who funds the Rule of Law Institute, just in the interests of transparency?"

The answer is that the Rule of Law Institute is an arm of the Rule of Law Education Centre. Details of the Rule of Law Institute, including the Audited Financial Statements are on the ACNC website <https://www.acnc.gov.au/charity/a96814a132e5e5fab0434da90c2c301c>

The Rule of Law Education Centre is funded through private donations and receives no government or overseas support. Details, including the Audited Financial Statements are available on the ACNC website. <https://www.acnc.gov.au/charity/6d638ff9bca96c90afc046b1593d7431>

Sincerely,

Chris Merritt
Vice-president,
The Rule of Law Institute of Australia