

Dear Committee,

Thanks for the Citizen Initiated Referendum Bill 2013 and seeking public submissions on it.

The adding of ability for Citizens to enact constitutional changes under a few provisions is a great example of democracy.

Like some of the other suggestions presented I would like:

1. The 1% limit qualification to be lowered to 0.5%. I don't see a problem with having potentially more number of referendum questions, I'd rather not miss out on the proposals put forward by a 0.5% of voters.
2. The powers of change increased to include any legislation that parliament is allowed to pass, excluding the right to pass bills of supply by citizen referendum.
3. The 13 month qualification period to extend to two years.
4. The referendum should be held at the same time to the Parliament elections to; a) minimise disturbance to voters lives; and b) ensure that political media coverage occurs on at least some issues considered of importance in a referendum and c) the political party policies can account for potential changes going into an election.
5. A Statement of Compatibility with Human Rights must be prepared and available to the signatories of the petition and the all voters at the referendum.
6. The validation requirements in section 11 seem rather vague. Is 100% of the either of the two random samples required to meet the qualification criteria. I suspect in the interval between signing and verification some people may not be at the same address so a 100% validation seems unachievable.
7. I'd like this bill to include a Section 128A amendment to the constitution as a referendum proposal with its meaning not require parliamentary consent of a referendum meeting the qualifying requirements, only advice, before the bill is referred to the Governor General for the issue of writs in accordance with this Act.

Just my thoughts,

Thanks for considering them.

Daniel Black