

To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of Urban Seed in support of the Defence Amendment (Parliamentary Approval of Overseas Service) Bill 2008. Urban Seed is a nonprofit organisation in the city of Melbourne which prioritises and assists homeless and other marginalised people while developing other similar communities throughout Victoria.

Transparency and accountability are central to any functioning democracy. The current absence of the normal democratic checks and balances with regard to overseas deployments is unsatisfactory at best and potentially dangerous at worst. It is essential that decisions of such great importance both to Australia and the rest of the world be subject to the same, if not greater, degree of rigour as other decisions regularly made by the Parliament.

It is now widely agreed that the Iraq war was an enormous mistake, and costly to many millions of lives and property. Such mistakes could be avoided in future by appealing to a wider range of representatives of the Australian people. Indeed, it is frequently these democratic principles which have been invoked as reasons for going to war. To abandon them by leaving such decisions to a small, unrepresentative group would be to undermine the very message we are aiming to communicate.

This bill is an important move to align ourselves with other democracies around the world which rely on Parliamentary approval for such deployments.

Yours sincerely,

Rev. Simon Moyle
Public Engagement Coordinator
On behalf of Urban Seed