

Joint Select Committee on the Parliamentary Budget Office

(1) That a Joint Select Committee on the Parliamentary Budget Office be appointed to examine the proposal to establish a Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO). It is proposed that the PBO will provide information to assist the Parliament in its consideration of matters related to the budget, by undertaking fiscal analysis and other relevant research and by providing policy costings advice. The PBO will also promote greater public awareness of key budget and fiscal policy issues. The Joint Select Committee will inquire into and report on:

- (a) the appropriate mandate for the Parliament Budget Office (PBO);
- (b) the nature of information needed to assist the Parliament in its consideration of matters related to the budget;
- (c) the role and adequacy of current institutions and processes in providing this information, and the areas in which additional support is required;
- (d) the scope for a PBO to fulfil its mandate in a cost-effective manner; and
- (e) bearing in mind these considerations, the most appropriate structure, resourcing and protocols for a PBO, including but not limited to:
 - (i) the PBO's functions and lines of accountability and oversight;
 - (ii) the routine work expected of the PBO and the minimum reporting requirements;
 - (iii) the protocols for members of parliament requesting non-routine work of the PBO, including the types of work and the rules for prioritising and carrying out these requests;
 - (iv) the protocols around access to and disclosure of the PBO's work and any confidentiality requirements;
 - (v) the protocols around the PBO's relationships with other institutions and processes, including government departments and agencies; and
 - (vi) an appropriate level of staffing, appropriate qualifications for staff, and resources to allow the PBO to fulfil its mandate; and
- (f) in conducting its inquiry, the Committee may choose to consider the operation and effectiveness of similar offices in other parliamentary democracies and their relevance to Australian circumstances.

(2) That the committee consist of 10 members, 3 Members of the House of Representatives to be nominated by the Government Whip or Whips, 2 Members of the House of Representatives to be nominated by the Opposition Whip or Whips, and one non-aligned Member, 2 Senators to be nominated by the Leader of the Government in the Senate, one Senator to be nominated by the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, and one Senator to be nominated by any minority group or groups or independent Senator or independent Senators.

(3) That every nomination of a member of the committee be notified in writing to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

(4) That the members of the committee hold office as a joint select committee until presentation of the committee's report or the House of Representatives is dissolved or expires by effluxion of time, whichever is the earlier.

(5) That the committee elect a government member as its chair.

(6) That the committee elect a member as its deputy chair who shall act as chair of the committee at any time when the chair is not present at a meeting of the committee, and at any time when the chair and deputy chair are not present at a meeting of the committee the members present shall elect another member to act as chair at that meeting.

(7) That, in the event of an equally divided vote, the chair, or the deputy chair when acting as chair, have a casting vote.

(8) That 3 members of the committee constitute a quorum of the committee provided that in a deliberative meeting the quorum shall include 1 Government member of either House and 1 non-Government member of either House.

(9) That the committee have power to appoint subcommittees consisting of 3 or more of its members and to refer to any subcommittee any matter which the committee is empowered to examine.

(10) That the committee appoint the chair of each subcommittee who shall have a casting vote only and at any time when the chair of a subcommittee is not present at a meeting of the subcommittee the members of the subcommittee present shall elect another member of that subcommittee to act as chair at that meeting.

(11) That 2 members of a subcommittee constitute the quorum of that subcommittee, provided that in a deliberative meeting the quorum shall include 1 Government member of either House and 1 non-Government member of either House.

(12) That members of the committee who are not members of a subcommittee may participate in the proceedings of that subcommittee but shall not vote, move any motion or be counted for the purpose of a quorum.

(13) That the committee or any subcommittee have power to call for witnesses to attend and for documents to be produced.

(14) That the committee or any subcommittee may conduct proceedings at any place it sees fit.

(15) That the committee or any subcommittee have power to adjourn from time to time and to sit during any adjournment of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

(16) That the committee may report from time to time but that it present its final report no later than 31 March 2011.

(17) That the provisions of this resolution, so far as they are inconsistent with the standing orders, have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the standing orders.