

HOW TO PREPARE A PETITION

This example is given to help you prepare the front page of a petition however variations in layout are acceptable. Subsequent pages need only have the 'request' of the petition, with names and signatures below it.

1. Address: Petitions must be addressed to the House

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

This petition of ...

draws to the attention of the House ...

We therefore ask the House to ...

2. Describe who the petition is from
e.g. 'certain citizens of Australia'

3. Terms: Maximum 250 words,
Comprising
• The words in the 'Address'
• Reason (outline issue)
• Request (ask for action)
Full terms needed on first page
only — subsequent pages
need only have the request.

NAME AND SIGNATURE

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
11.
12.
13.

4. Signatures
• Must be in original
handwriting
• Signatures on the back
of a page or on blank,
faxed or photocopied
pages, will **not** be
counted
• Other information such
as postal addresses may
also be provided
• If required, attach extra
pages (request must be
at top of every page)

PRINCIPAL PETITIONER

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Email (if available): _____ Telephone: _____

5. Principal petitioner:
• Contact details needed on first
page only
• Information will not be published

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Petitions to the House of Representatives have to follow several rules, so you should contact the Petitions Committee as early as possible (**before** you start collecting signatures) to ensure your petition can be accepted.

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Petitions

PO Box 6021

Parliament House,
Canberra ACT 2600

Phone: 02 6277 2152

petitions.committee.reps@aph.gov.au

For more information, contact us

or visit

www.aph.gov.au/house/work/petitions.htm

Petitions can not be submitted electronically at present. The Petitions Committee intends to review this policy in due course.



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS

PETITIONS

Making your views heard

Photo of Marble Foyer, Parliament House, Australia courtesy of ©John Boyd Macdonald.



PETITION
ORDERED TO LIE ON THE TABLE.
CLERK OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Australians have long had the right
to petition Parliament directly, asking
for action to be taken on an issue.

This brochure explains how to
make sure your voice is heard.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

In early 2008 the House of Representatives changed standing orders (the rules of the House) relating to the way petitions are dealt with, and a Petitions Committee was established to ensure that all petitions presented to the House are considered and receive a response.

All petitions are examined by the Petitions Committee prior to presentation to ensure that they comply with the standing orders. This pamphlet provides advice on the technical requirements of a petition. Further advice is available from the Petitions Committee secretariat (see reverse for contact details).

It is hoped that the new arrangements will result in petitions becoming a more effective way of involving the community in the work of the Parliament.

GETTING THE PETITION PRESENTED

Petitions can be sent directly to the Petitions Committee for presentation in the House of Representatives.

Alternatively, you can forward your petition to a Member of the House of Representatives, either for them to present personally or for them to pass to the Petitions Committee.

A PETITION MUST

- ▶ be addressed to the Speaker and the Members of the House of Representatives
not to the Prime Minister
not to 'the Parliament'
not to an individual Minister
not 'to whom it may concern'
- ▶ be on a matter on which the House is able to act, that is, a **Commonwealth** legislative or administrative matter
- ▶ be written using moderate language
- ▶ not promote illegal acts
- ▶ be in English, **or** accompanied by a translation certified to be correct (giving the name and address of the person certifying the translation)
- ▶ include contact details and signature of a **principal petitioner** on the front page

The **principal petitioner** is the person who initiates, sponsors or organises a petition. Where a group of people is involved, one person must be nominated as the principal petitioner.

The principal petitioner is the contact point for the Petitions Committee to advise about action taken on the petition.

Members of the House of Representatives **cannot** be principal petitioners **or** sign a petition.

SIGNATURES

The House of Representatives sets out certain rules about how signatures can be collected. Further to information shown on the sample front page of a petition overleaf:

- ▶ Petitions must be on paper and signatures must be in original handwriting
- ▶ If unable to sign, the petitioner may ask another person to sign on his or her behalf
- ▶ Signatures cannot be collected or submitted electronically at this time

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

All petitions that conform with the rules of the House will be presented and their details recorded in Hansard (the record of parliamentary debates). On behalf of the House, the Petitions Committee may respond to petitions in a range of ways, including:

- ▶ an invitation to the principal petitioner to participate in further discussions with the Committee. It will not be possible to hold discussions on all petitions.
- ▶ a decision to refer the terms of the petition to the Minister responsible for the administration of the matter raised. In this case, the Minister is expected to respond to the petition within 90 days.

Details of any ministerial responses will also be recorded in Hansard and on the Committee's web site.

Principal petitioners will be advised of any responses.