

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY COALITION SENATORS

1.1 Coalition senators consider that the terms of the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Law Enforcement Integrity, Vulnerable Witness Protection and Other Measures) Bill 2013 are directed at a number of apparently useful changes to existing legislation. Some of those changes have been expressly welcomed by submitters to the inquiry.

1.2 However, Coalition senators take this opportunity to outline their concerns with the lack of proper scrutiny which this bill has been afforded under this rushed reference to the committee.

1.3 Input to this inquiry has been seriously hampered by the restrictive timeframe, putting at risk the strong reputation of this committee for conducting careful and comprehensive scrutiny of every bill referred to it.

1.4 It is this fact that Australian Lawyers for Human Rights (ALHR) raise in their submission where they state:

The fact that submissions are required in less than 40 hours destroys any notion of accountability and public scrutiny which is sought to be provided by public involvement in the committee process.¹

1.5 They go on to say:

However because of the time period the Parliament has chosen to allocate for submissions, ALHR are unable to assess and respond on these matters. We would like the Committee to note our concern and opposition to such a short time being made for submissions.²

1.6 That only six submissions were received to this inquiry, three of which were submitted from government bodies, highlights the Government's haste to pass through this parliament a raft of last minute legislation.

1.7 In light of this, Coalition senators feel unable to express wholehearted confidence in the package of measures this bill incorporates, but do not recommend that the Senate reject the measures on that ground alone.

Senator Gary Humphries
Deputy Chair

Senator Sue Boyce

1 *Submission 1*, p. 1.

2 *Submission 1*, p. 1.