

Australia Card Referendum Bill 1987

Date Introduced: 15 September 1987

House: Senate

Presented by: Senator the Hon. Fred Chaney

(Private Senator's Bill)

Digest of Bill

Purpose

To provide the mechanism for a referendum on the Australia Card proposal.

Background

The operation of the Australia Card Bill depends on the proclamation, by regulation, of operative days. The requirements to produce the card would only come into force after this day. In late September 1987, the Opposition and the Australian Democrats announced that they would disallow, in the Senate, any regulations proclaiming the operative days. This meant that the legislation could not come into effect even if passed at a joint sitting of both Houses. This Bill was introduced before the use of the power to disallow regulations to defeat the Australia Card proposal was realised.

Also refer to the Digest for the Australia Card Bill.

Main Provisions

Clause 6 provides for the issue of writs for the referendum on the Australia Card.

The only government money that may be spent in attempting to convince voters of the benefits/disadvantages of the card proposal will be on the preparation of pamphlets on each side on the argument. The pamphlets in favour of the card are to be authorised by a majority of the members of Parliament who voted for the proposal. A similar rule will apply for the argument against the proposal (clause 8).

The proposed ballot paper, which asks voters, 'Do you approve of the introduction of the proposed Australia Card?', is contained in Schedule 2 of the Bill.

For further information, if required, contact the Law and Government Group.

14 March 1988

Bills Digest Service
Legislative Research Service

This Digest does not have any official legal status. Other sources should be consulted to determine the subsequent official status of the Bill.

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