

Clifford, Julia (SEN)

From: pauline gallagher [paulinet22@hotmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, 26 April 2003 10:01 PM
To: Legal and Constitutional, Committee (SEN)
Subject: Human Rights Commission



I wishto indicate my concerns regarding the proposed amendments to the Human Rights Commission.

1. I believe that the changes will lead to the demise of the effectiveness of the Human Rights Commission by reducing the number of commissioners from five to three, and generalising their work. For example, none of the three Human Rights Commissioners would have specific responsibility for race discrimination or for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social justice;
2. the Human Rights Commission is effectively turned into a government lap-dog by forcing it to seek the Attorney General's permission BEFORE it can investigate any issue (e.g, refugees, indigenous people, people with mental health or other issues would never get this government's OK). This is giving unprecedented power into the hands of one individual who will not always be the same person in office.
3. not enough time has been allowed for proper written submissions to be prepared: Sydney 29 April, Canberra 30 April, which indicates a guilt on behalf of the Governement, not being prepared to have a proper and open public discussion about issues of concern to the public.

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