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**From:** Ben Clarke [mailto:[bclarke@nd.edu.au](mailto:bclarke@nd.edu.au)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 10 April 2003 6:53 PM  
**To:** Legal and Constitutional, Committee (SEN)  
**Subject:** Prposal to abolish HR commissioner

Dear Peter Hallahan

I write to express my opposition to the proposal to abolish post of Race Discrimination Commissioner.

I note the considerable achievements of the Race Discrimination Commissioners including the following:

1986-87 – mediation of racial tensions in Goondiwindi and referral of Toomelah community conditions and services to the President for HREOC's first public inquiry (which reported in 1988)  
1991 - national inquiry into Racist Violence recommending the introduction of racial vilification legislation and other measures  
1993-1996 – annual State of the Nation reports on the extent to which people from non-English speaking backgrounds experience equality and freedom from discrimination  
1994 – a report drawing attention to the lack of safe drinking water in remote Indigenous communities  
1995 - racial vilification legislation introduced; strong support for Aboriginal communities wishing to limit access to alcohol  
1996 – publication of Face the Facts, providing factual information to counter prevalent misinformation about refugees, immigration and Indigenous issues  
1997 - publication of a guide for the media on the racial vilification legislation  
1999-2000 – independent information about racial discrimination in Australia provided to relevant UN treaty committees  
2001 - national consultations on racism in Australia in preparation for the World Conference Against Racism; second edition of Face the Facts  
2002 – symposium on racial vilification on the internet

Yours sincerely

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