

3/58 Darley Road  
MANLY NSW 2095

April 14, 2003

Peter Hallahan  
Secretary  
Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee  
Room S1.61 Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600



Dear Mr Hallahan

I am concerned about the proposed Australian Human Rights Commission Bill and changes to the functioning of the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission. The changes would mean the replacement of existing specialist commissioners (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice, Race Discrimination, Sex Discrimination, Disability Discrimination) with three commissioners with general responsibilities. Each of these areas deserves specialist attention and specialist expertise. They should not have to compete with each other for the attention of commissioners with diluted responsibilities and no specialist experience.

Australia is an increasingly divisive society. Racial prejudice, which seemed for a time to be on the wane is now rearing its ugly head again. We've come a long way since the days when Aboriginal children could be refused entry to schools if parents of white children objected to their presence. But changes have only come about because of dedicated campaigners. It's important to keep moving forward and not a time to take a retrograde step.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Moffitt".

Margaret Moffitt