



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS**

*Chair: Mrs Julia Irwin MP
Deputy Chair: Mr Russell Broadbent MP*

NEW INQUIRY INTO ELECTRONIC PETITIONING

The House Standing Committee on Petitions today announced a new inquiry into an electronic petitioning system for the House of Representatives.

“The way petitions are handled in the House has changed significantly this year, with a number of initiatives, including the establishment of this Committee. Having an electronic petitioning system will be another step in helping people put their views on subjects directly to the Parliament”, Committee Chair Julia Irwin commented.

“We will be looking at whether we have a ‘minimalist’ type of system, where we simply accept petitions run on-line by other bodies, or whether the House should have a dedicated web-site where petitions can be hosted”, Ms Irwin said. “The Queensland and Tasmanian parliaments already have electronic petitioning, and the Committee will be looking at any lessons that can be learned from their experience”.

The terms of reference for the inquiry are as follows:

To examine and report on the introduction of an electronic petitioning system for the House of Representatives, with particular reference to:

- a) the different models of electronic petitioning that could be introduced, and their effectiveness in facilitating electronic petitioning of the House of Representatives;*
- b) changes required to the practices and procedures of the House in implementation of an e-petitions system;*
- c) the role of Members in e-petitioning;*
- d) privacy and security concerns;*
- e) the financial and resource implications of an e-petitions system; and*
- f) the experience of other relevant jurisdictions, both in Australia and overseas.*

The Committee would welcome submissions addressing the terms of reference from interested members of the public. Submissions should be sent to the Committee secretariat by **8 August 2008**. It is preferred that submissions are sent by email to petitons.committee.reps@aph.gov.au.

For media comment please contact the Committee Chair, Julia Irwin, on (02) 6277 4300 (Parliament House); or (02) 9755 7911(Electorate Office).

For background information please contact the Committee secretariat:

Phone: (02) 6277 2152;

Email: petitions.committee.reps@aph.gov.au; or

Website: <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/petitions/index.htm>
