



Premier of Queensland

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Thank you for your letter of 27 October 2010 concerning petition No. 1420–10 presented by the Member for Hervey Bay, Mr Ted Sorensen MP, and received by the Parliament on 26 October 2010.

In August 2009, the Queensland Government released the discussion paper, *Integrity and Accountability in Queensland*, to promote public discussion on improving Queensland's integrity and accountability framework. A number of submissions received in response to this discussion paper related to the possible reinstatement of an Upper House in Queensland.

The Queensland Government considered all feedback received on this issue and in November 2009 released the *Response to Integrity and Accountability in Queensland*. The Government determined at this time that it would not pursue the re-establishment of an Upper House in Queensland given the mixed views on this matter expressed during consultation, and that implementing such a decision would require majority support at a referendum and result in greater ongoing costs to Queensland taxpayers.

However, the discussion paper consultation highlighted the importance — in our unicameral system — of the Parliament having a high standard of scrutiny over the legislative process. In response to this feedback, the Government committed to creating a bipartisan committee to review the role of parliamentary committees in evaluating and examining legislative proposals.

On 25 February 2010, the Review of the Parliamentary Committee System Committee was appointed as a select committee of Parliament to conduct this inquiry. This bipartisan committee will consider parliamentary committee systems in other Australian and international jurisdictions and timely and cost effective ways in which Queensland parliamentary committees can more effectively evaluate and examine legislative proposals. The committee is due to report back to the Parliament by the end of 2010.



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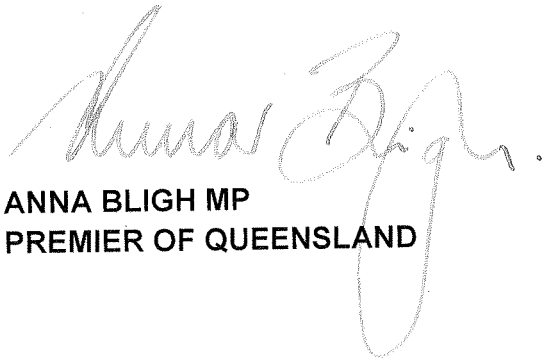
In addition to the review of the parliamentary committees, the Government is committed to strengthening responsible and representative government by enhancing openness and accountability. The *Response to Integrity and Accountability in Queensland* detailed a comprehensive legislative and administrative program of reform aimed at providing a robust integrity and accountability framework for Queensland.

Measures which have been implemented as part of these reforms include strengthening whistleblowers protection, establishing a new legislative framework for the employment of Ministerial staff separate from the public service, introducing new laws regulating the conduct of lobbying activity in Queensland and developing a new single code of conduct for the public service based on revised and modernised ethics principles and values.

The Government is committed to a continual process of adapting and strengthening Queensland's integrity and accountability framework, thus ensuring that the framework evolves apace with our State's remarkable rate of development.

I would like to thank the petitioners for their active participation in Queensland's democratic process and for bringing their views to the attention of the Parliament.

Yours sincerely



ANNA BLIGH MP
PREMIER OF QUEENSLAND