

Dear Federal Members of Parliament,

On the 7th of December 2017 the Australian Government introduced into the Federal Parliament a package of three pieces of legislation. The three pieces of legislation consist of the Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Funding and Disclosure Reform) Bill 2017, the Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Bill 2017 and the National Security Legislation Amendment (Espionage and Foreign Interference) Bill 2017.

The stated intention of the Bills is to stop foreign interference in the Australian electoral process and on national security. But it has quickly become apparent to charities, community groups and other not-for-profits that the Bills propose grave and far-reaching changes that extend well beyond their publicly stated purposes.

If enacted, the proposed legislation will tear at the fabric of our democracy, unpicking the freedoms that have made our national conversation so rich. We are united in opposition to the proposed Bills.

The proposed Bills conflate advocacy for good policy with political campaigning for elections. They impose severe criminal penalties on expression and access to information that is central to public debate and accountability in a democratic society. The changes will stop charities, community organizations and not-for-profits from speaking out about issues that are of great importance to the Australian community.

The people of Australia and our country's civil society need to be free to air their views. This best guarantees that our laws and policies truly support the Australian community. That freedom is under threat from the proposed changes in this Bills package.

We are calling for the Federal Government, and all of our Parliamentarians, to pause, consult with those affected by these Bills and to redraft them. If left unchanged they will undermine the voice of the Australian community and threaten our democracy.

A simple, vital, step the government should take is to follow its own guidelines and prepare a *Regulation Impact Statement*, given that these Bills will have a huge impact on businesses, community organisations and individual Australians.

We will continue to address issues raised by the Bills and bring to the notice of parliamentarians the harmful effects of this legislation on the participation of Australians in their democracy.

This open letter is supported by the following groups:



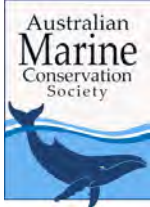









Act for Peace – NCCA



Action Aid




 <p>ADRA Australia</p>	 <p>Adult Learning Australia</p>
 <p>Aid/Watch</p>	 <p>Alliance for Gambling Reform</p>
 <p>Alliance to Save Hinchinbrook</p>	 <p>Alola Australia</p>
 <p>Amnesty International</p>	 <p>Anglican Overseas Aid</p>
 <p>Anglican Board of Mission</p>	 <p>Anglicare Australia</p>
 <p>Animal Liberation Queensland</p>	 <p>Arid Lands Environment Centre</p>
 <p>Australasian Centre for Corporate Responsibility</p>	 <p>Australian Business Volunteers</p>
 <p>Australian Conservation Foundation</p>	 <p>Australian Council for International Development</p>
















 <p>Australian Council of Social Services</p>	 <p>Australian Education Union</p>
 <p>Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network</p>	 <p>Australian Lawyers for Human Rights</p>
 <p>Australian Major Performing Arts Group</p>	 <p>Australian Marine Conservation Society</p>
 <p>Australian Progress</p>	 <p>Australian Refugee Action Network</p>
 <p>Australian Services Union</p>	 <p>Australian Youth Climate Coalition</p>
 <p>Baptist World Aid/ Transform Aid</p>	 <p>Bellingen Environment Centre</p>
 <p>Benalla Sustainable Future Group</p>	 <p>Beyond Zero Emissions</p>










 <p>BirdLife Australia</p>	 <p>Boomerang Alliance (representing the groups in this graphic)</p>
 <p>Campaign for Australian Aid</p>	 <p>CARE Australia</p>
 <p>Caritas Australia</p>	 <p>CBM Australia</p>
 <p>Centre for an Ethical Society</p>	 <p>Christians for an Ethical Society</p>
 <p>Climate and Health Alliance</p>	 <p>Climate for Change</p>
 <p>cohealth</p>	 <p>Colong Foundation for Wilderness</p>
 <p>Combined Refugee Action Group</p>	 <p>Community Broadcasting Association of Australia</p>

 <p>Community Council for Australia</p>	 <p>Community Power Agency</p>
 <p>Conservation Council of Canberra & SE Region</p>	 <p>Conservation Council SA</p>
 <p>Conservation Council of Western Australia</p>	 <p>Conservation Management Network (VIC)</p>
 <p>Consumer Action</p>	 <p>Consumers Federation of Australia</p>
 <p>Democracy in Colour</p>	 <p>Digital Rights Watch</p>
 <p>Earthworker Co-op</p>	 <p>East Gippsland Rainforest Conservation Management Network</p>
 <p>Edmund Rice Foundation (Australia)</p>	 <p>Environment Centre NT</p>
 <p>Environment East Gippsland</p>	 <p>Environment Victoria</p>

 <p>Environmental Justice Australia</p> <p>Environmental Justice Australia</p>	 <p>Environs Kimberley</p>
 <p>Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform</p>	 <p>Family Planning New South Wales</p>
 <p>Farmers for Climate Action</p>	 <p>Foundation for Young Australians</p>
 <p>Fraser Island Defenders Organisation</p>	 <p>Friends of the Earth Australia</p>
 <p>Geelong Field Naturalists Club</p>	 <p>Geelong Sustainability</p>
 <p>Gene Ethics</p>	<p>Gippsland Environment Group</p>
 <p>Global Health Alliance Melbourne</p>	 <p>GM-Free Australia Alliance</p>
 <p>Goongerah Environment Centre</p>	 <p>Goulburn Valley Environment Group</p>






 <p>Green Music Australia</p>	 <p>Greenpeace</p>
 <p>Habitat for Humanity Australia</p>	 <p>HammondCare</p>
 <p>Healesville Environment Watch Inc.</p>	 <p>Healthy Futures</p>
 <p>Householders' Option to Protect the Environment (HOPE) Inc.</p>	 <p>Human Rights Law Centre</p>
 <p>Humane Society International</p>	 <p>International Fund for Animal Welfare</p>
 <p>Invasive Species Council</p>	 <p>JMTInc</p>
 <p>Journeys for Climate Justice</p>	 <p>Justice Connect</p>
 <p>Kalang River Forest Alliance</p>	 <p>Knitting Nannas of Toolangi</p>

 <p>Koala Action Inc.</p>	 <p>Limestone Coast Protection Alliance</p>
 <p>Lock the Gate</p>	 <p>Madden Sainsbury Foundation</p>
 <p>MADGE</p>	 <p>Market Forces</p>
 <p>Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance</p>	 <p>Moreton Bay Koala Rescue Inc.</p>
<p>Mt Taylor Park Care Group (ACT)</p>	 <p>Musica Viva Australia</p>
 <p>National Parks Association of NSW</p>	 <p>National Parks Association of the ACT</p>
<p>National Parks Australia Council Working together for nature conservation areas</p>  <p>National Parks Australia Council</p>	 <p>National Tertiary Education Union</p>
 <p>National Union of Workers</p>	 <p>Nature Conservation Council of New South Wales</p>

 <p>Nature Conservation Society of South Australia</p>	 <p>NERSA - North East Regional Sustainability Alliance</p>
 <p>North Queensland Conservation Council</p>	 <p>NSW Nurses and Midwives Association</p>
 <p>Oaktree</p>	 <p>Oxfam</p>
 <p>OzHarvest</p>	 <p>Philanthropy Australia</p>
 <p>Public Land Advocacy Network (PLAN)</p>	 <p>Queensland Conservation Council</p>
 <p>Queensland Koala Crusaders Inc.</p>	 <p>Refugee Council of Australia</p>
 <p>Renewable Albury Wodonga Energy Inc - RAW Energy</p>	 <p>RESULTS International (Australia) Inc.</p>
 <p>Rural Australians for Refugees</p>	 <p>Save The Children</p>

 <p>Sea Shepherd</p>	 <p>Social Ventures Australia</p>
 <p>SolarCitizens Solar Citizens</p>	 <p>South East Region Conservation Alliance</p>
 <p>Sunshine Coast Environment Council</p>	 <p>Sydney Peace Foundation</p>
 <p>Tasmanian Conservation Trust</p>	 <p>TEAR Australia</p>
 <p>The Australia Institute</p>	 <p>The Australian Charities Fund</p>
 <p>The Centre for Volunteering</p>	 <p>The Climate Council</p>
 <p>The Fred Hollows Foundation</p>	 <p>The Pew Charitable Trusts</p>
 <p>The Wilderness Society</p>	 <p>Total Environment Centre</p>

 <p>Transparency International Australia</p>	 <p>Tweed Water Alliance Inc.</p>
 <p>Union Aid Abroad (APHEDA)</p>	 <p>United Voice National</p>
 <p>Uniting Church in Australia SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA</p> <p>Uniting Church in Australia (Synod Victoria and Tasmania)</p>	 <p>UnitingWorld connecting communities for life</p> <p>UnitingWorld</p>
 <p>VICTORIAN NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION <i>Be part of nature</i></p> <p>Victorian National Parks Association</p>	 <p>Volunteering Australia</p>
 <p>Volunteering Tasmania do what you love</p> <p>Volunteering Tasmania</p>	 <p>Volunteering Victoria</p> <p>Volunteering Victoria</p>
 <p>Wangaratta Sustainability Network</p> <p>Wangaratta Sustainability Network</p>	 <p>WATCH - Wodonga Albury Toward Climate Health</p>
 <p>WaterAid Australia</p>	 <p>Welcome to Australia FOR THOSE WHO'VE COME ACROSS THE SEAS</p> <p>Welcome to Australia</p>

<p>Wesley Centre Asylum Seeker Welcome Place</p>	 <p>Wide Bay Burnett Environment Council Inc.</p>
	<p>Yajilarra Trust</p>
	 <p>3CR Community Radio Station</p>
 <p>4nature</p>	