



Attorney-General and Minister for Justice
Minister for Training and Skills

In reply please quote: 2829999

27 APR 2015

Level 18 State Law Building
50 Ann Street Brisbane 4000
GPO Box 149 Brisbane
Queensland 4001 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3719 7400
Email attorney@ministerial.qld.gov.au
Website www.justice.qld.gov.au

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Cnr Alice and George Streets
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to Petition No. 2357-15, presented to the Queensland Legislative Assembly petitioning for the introduction of: full recall election petitions which could cause a general election to be called and individual recall election petitions for particular electorates (recall petitions); citizens initiated referenda; and, subject to those safeguards, longer parliamentary terms.

I can advise that these options are not under consideration by the Government.

Under our Westminster system of representative democracy, the Queensland Parliament is responsible for making laws for the peace, welfare and good government of the State. Elected members are held to account through general elections which must be held at least every three years.

The prospect of recall petitions could create unnecessary instability, and would have the potential to distract the government of the day from its responsibilities. The cost and inconvenience to the community of the recall petitions and any resulting elections and by-elections are also relevant considerations.

Holding citizens initiated referenda would not be an effective method for consulting on or analysing the numerous policy issues under consideration by the government of the day at any one time or balancing the competing interests that may be involved, particularly for complex issues. They would also have the potential to be costly and inconvenient for the community and, depending on the issue, divisive rather than constructive or informative.

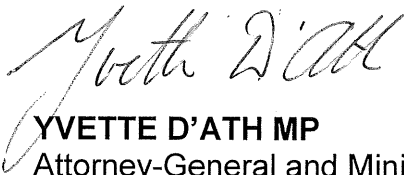
There are established processes for members of the public and interest groups to express their views on issues. The Government website (www.qld.gov.au) and the Get Involved website (at <https://www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au>) facilitate and set out various opportunities for community engagement. They include: writing to local members and responsible Ministers; attending community Cabinet meetings; making submissions to public consultations and to parliamentary committees; and lodging a paper petitions and e-petitions to the Parliament, as these petitioners have done.

(2)

Thank you for bringing the views of the petitioners to my attention.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Yvette D'ATH". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

YVETTE D'ATH MP

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice
Minister for Training and Skills