



Premier of Queensland
Minister for the Olympics



Brisbane 2032
Olympic and Paralympic
Games Host
Queensland



For reply please quote: *CAPS/AT – TF/21/26447 – DOC/21/228293*

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Mr Neil Laurie
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Dear Mr Laurie 

I refer to Petition 3597-21 about binding citizen initiated referenda which was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 26 October 2021.

Petition 3597-21 is similar in nature to Petition 3545-21 which was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 31 August 2021, and to which I responded on 30 September 2021.

As outlined in that response and reiterated here, my Government supports Queensland's current constitutional and parliamentary system within which laws are made by the democratically elected Legislative Assembly with the assent of the Governor.

Petition 3597-21 alludes to a discussion in 1998 about citizen initiated referenda. This is likely to be a reference to the Citizens' Initiated Referendum (Constitution Amendment) Bill that was introduced into the Legislative Assembly by the then Member for Nicklin, Mr Peter Wellington, on 25 August 1998.

That Bill was debated by the Legislative Assembly on 11 November 1998, but was defeated at the second reading stage by a vote of 11 Ayes, to 64 Noes.

As outlined in my response to Petition 3545-21, it is noted that some of Queensland's laws cannot be amended or repealed unless they have been approved by electors at a referendum, for example, the duration of terms of the Legislative Assembly. However, the number of these laws is limited, and my Government does not support a constitutional and parliamentary system that also incorporates citizen initiated referenda as requested in Petition 3597-21.

The petitioners may wish to note that integrity, accountability and proper consultation and parliamentary processes are key principles my Government has been following since taking office in February 2015. We believe Queenslanders have every right to voice their opinions on the issues of the day.

Bills introduced into the Legislative Assembly by my Government are routinely referred to a Parliamentary Committee for inquiry before they can be further debated. As part of their inquiries into Government Bills, committees call for public submissions, hold public hearings, question witnesses and generally gather as much information and suggestions from the public as possible on the Bill. From the information gathered, the committee will then prepare a report to the Assembly on the Bill, outlining recommendations to the Government.

My Government also regularly conducts its own public consultation processes on Bills before they are introduced and also consults the public on other matters requiring a decision by the Government.

The petitioning of the Parliament process, as exercised by the petitioners in this case, is another process that enables citizens to voice their opinion on issues, with Ministers required to respond about the matters raised.

Queenslanders can also voice their opinions on matters by contacting Ministers, other members of the Legislative Assembly, government departments and other entities via correspondence, websites or on the telephone. Queenslanders can also voice their opinions via the media and also have the right to participate in peaceful public assemblies.

As the ultimate expression of their voice, Queenslanders vote at regular elections for their preferred candidate to represent them in their electorate in the Legislative Assembly.

While my Government does not support the request made in this petition, I appreciate the interest of the petitioners in Queensland's parliamentary system and respect their right to provide their thoughts on these matters to the Legislative Assembly.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized initial 'A' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

**ANNASTACIA PALASZCZUK MP
PREMIER OF QUEENSLAND
MINISTER FOR THE OLYMPICS**