



Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety

Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2022-2023

ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

Asked by Mr Peter Cain MLA on 24 November 2023: Mr Chris Steel MLA took on notice the following question(s):

Reference: Hansard [uncorrected] proof transcript 24 November 2023 [PAGE #11]

In relation to: Date of last meeting with the Federal Minister

THE CHAIR: But you would know how many the ACT government thinks there should be. How many does the ACT government think there should be?

Mr Steel: I think the view generally is that it should be increased, because the current level is not satisfying the requirements of fair representation in the upper house; the states house.

THE CHAIR: Increased to what?

Mr Steel: We think it should be increased. There will be different views about exactly how many that should be, but certainly a fair level of representation is what we would like to see and at the moment we think that that is currently not adequate. But ultimately, these are matters for the federal government around decision making. We will certainly try to have input into those decision-making processes through various inquiries into any legislation that may be put forward, because this is a matter that can be enacted through legislation. It does not require a constitutional change.

THE CHAIR: Are you satisfied that you are being adequately engaged by Senator Farrell and the federal government on this issue?

Mr Steel: I think they would certainly provide an opportunity for us to have engagement at the appropriate time.

THE CHAIR: You are satisfied that you are being consulted appropriately and regularly?

Mr Steel: I am satisfied that we have engagement with the federal government in relation to these matters.

THE CHAIR: Yet you cannot recall the last time you engaged with the federal senator on this?

Mr Steel: I can recall it. I do not have the exact date in front of me.

THE CHAIR: It was obviously quite a while ago.

Mr Steel: No, not necessarily. I am happy to provide the date of that meeting on notice. It has probably already been published, actually, on the publication of ministerial meetings.

CHRIS STEEL MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

I met with Senator Farrell, the Commonwealth Special Minister of State, on 22 August 2022 where we discussed, amongst other things, electoral matters and the representation of the ACT in the Federal Parliament.

The ACT Government also provided a submission into the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters inquiry into the 2022 Federal Election which included representations about increasing the representation of the ACT in the Australian Parliament. This submission is available on the Australian Parliament website.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety

Signature:



Date:

28/11/23

By the Special Minister of State, Minister Chris Steel