

# GET YOUR GOVERNANCE ON

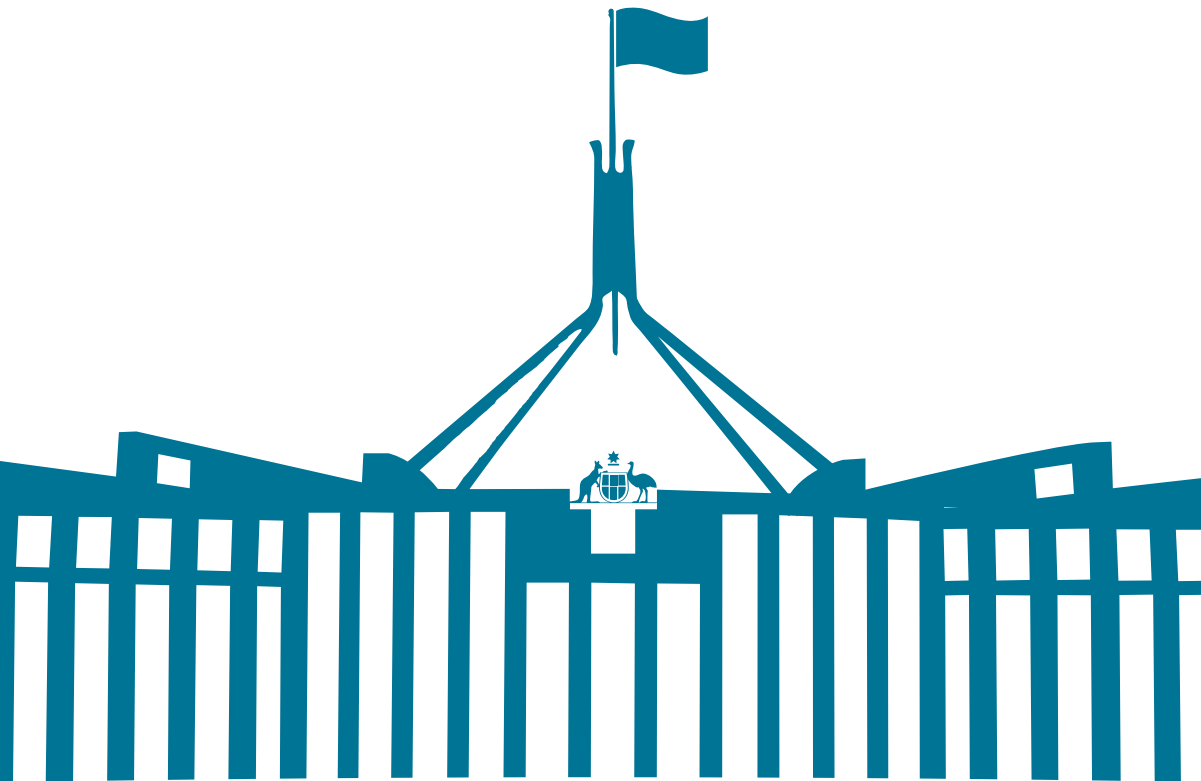
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2023 James Cook University Law Seminar Series

Rebekha Sharkie MP

Federal Member for Mayo



# 151

Members are  
elected to the  
House of  
Representatives



# 76

Senators are  
elected to the  
Senate

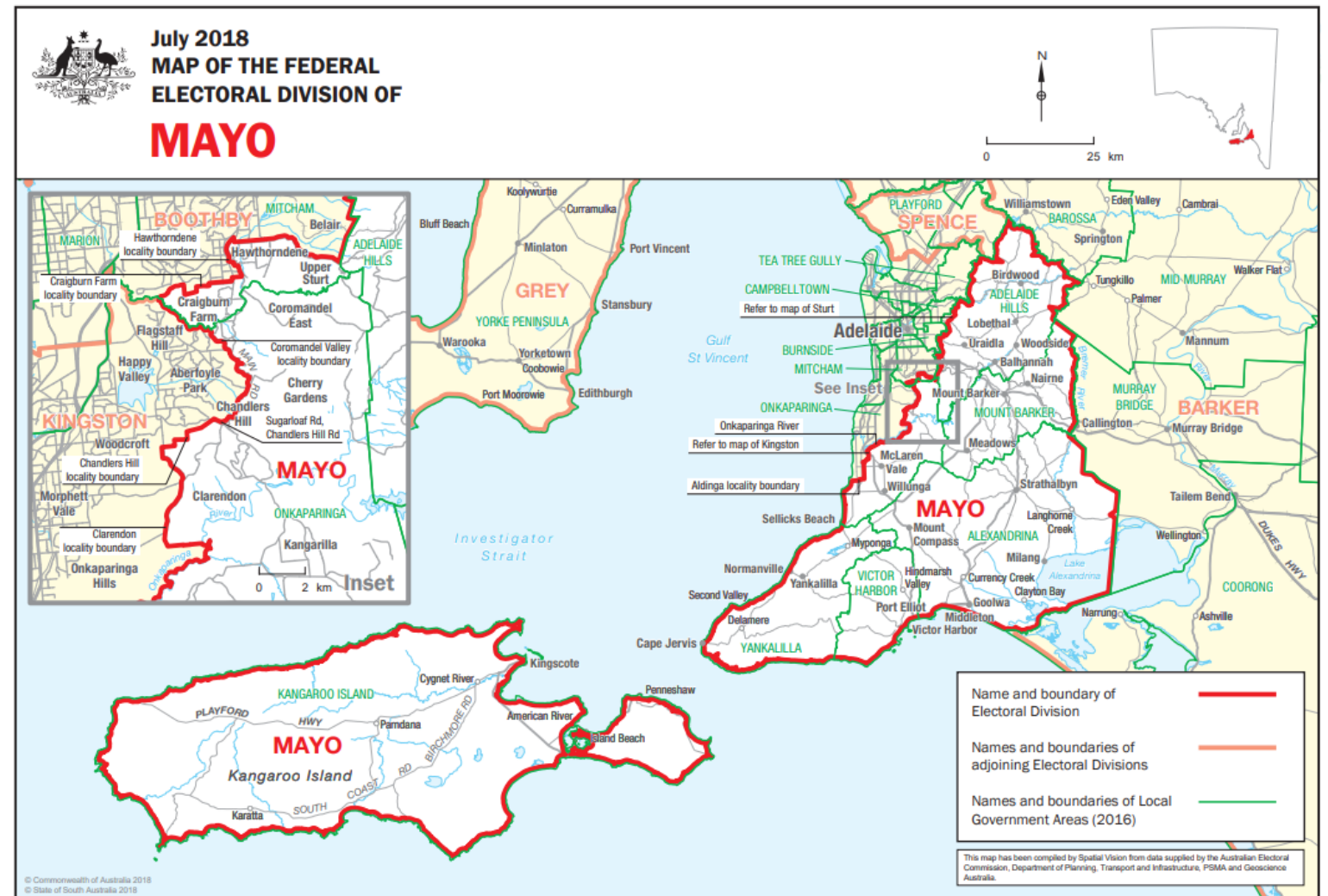




# ABOUT ME AND MAYO



Member of the House of Representatives elected by the electorate of Mayo, South Australia, with 131,500+ registered voters and covering 9,135km<sup>2</sup>.



# PARLIAMENTARY WORK

- Debate and vote on bills
- Consult and advocate on important issues and policies
- Scrutinise the work of Government
- Participate in Parliamentary Committees and Parliamentary Friendship Groups
- Represent Australia e.g. supporting emerging democracies





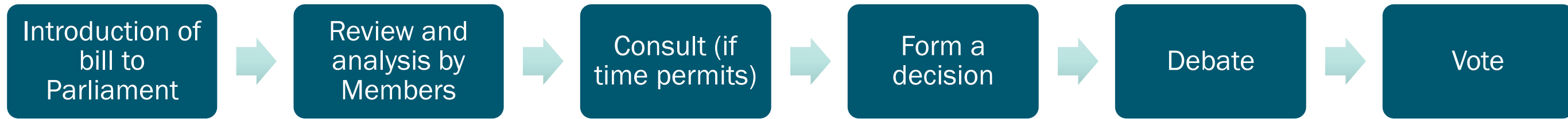
# ELECTORATE-FACING WORK



- Meet with constituents, schools, community groups and other organisations
- Consult with and respond to constituents, and escalate concerns where needed
- Assist and advocate for Mayo constituents who have Federal concerns

# MAKING AND AMENDING LAWS

## (The usual process)





# MAKING AND AMENDING LAWS CONT.



- Different for members of major parties vs Crossbench/minor parties
- If approved by the House of Representatives and the Senate, the bill is granted Royal Assent by the Governor-General, and becomes an Act of Parliament
- An amendment bill amends an existing Act

# PRIVATE MEMBERS BILLS & MOTIONS

## Crossbench as the *‘conscience of the Chamber’*

- Introduced/moved during Private Members Business
- Usually not brought to a vote by Government
- Less than 5% of Private Members Bills passed since Federation
- These bills and motions can still be used to:
  - Set the agenda
  - Hold the Government to account
  - Reflect and sway public opinion
  - Influence or nudge Government policy



Cross-bench Members introduced Bills and motions and advocated during the last two Parliaments for a Federal Integrity and Corruption Commission, since enacted into law.





These reforms have involved consulting with peak integrity bodies, speaking in the Parliament, and liaising with the media.

# ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENTS

- My Lowering the Donation Disclosure Threshold Bills 2019, and 2023 – yet to be introduced
  - Redefine ‘donation’, reporting threshold down to \$1,000
- Real Time Disclosure of Political Donations Bills 2019 and 2023
  - Require reporting of donations within 5 business days
  - Labor Opposition introduced equivalent Bills in 2019
  - Recommended by Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters Interim Report into Review of 2022 Election
- Plus Unsolicited Political Communications Amdt Bill 2021
  - Allows people to opt out of electoral ‘spam’ texts

# AGED CARE ACT AMENDMENTS

- Staffing Ratio Disclosure Bills 2018 & 2019
  - Requires reporting of staff makeup and ratio of carers
- Making Aged Care Fees Fairer Bill 2021
  - Applies a percentage cap on administration and management fees
  - Since implemented in part by current Government
- Financial Transparency Bill 2020
  - Increases financial reporting requirements
- Worker Screening Database Bill 2019

The Fairer Fees Bill was developed following a survey of all registered voters in Mayo aged over 65 years and analysis of aged care fees and charges.







The Credit Card Ban bill was developed in consultation with the Alliance for Gambling Reform and launched with fellow Parliamentary Friends of Gambling Harm Reduction.

# INTERACTIVE GAMBLING ACT AMENDMENTS

- Credit Card Ban and Acknowledgement of Losses Bill 2023
  - Bans use of credit for interactive gambling (since adopted by Government)
  - Requires acknowledgement of losses before signing into gambling applications
- Ban on Gambling Advertisements Bill 2023
  - Bans radio, TV and online advertising of interactive gambling
- Advertising ban since recommended by Government chaired Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs 2023 Inquiry into online gambling

# HUMAN RIGHTS AMENDMENTS

- Migration Amendment Bills
  - Urgent Medical Treatment Bill 2018
  - Kids off Nauru Bill 2018
- Public pressure influenced policy of former Government on treatment of asylum seekers on Nauru
- Crimes Legislation Amendment (Age of Criminal Responsibility) Bill 2019
  - Referred to State and Territory Attorneys-General
  - Northern Territory has raised the age from 10 to 14
- Customs Amendment (Banning Goods Produced by Forced Labour) Bill 2021



The Nauru bills were collaboratively developed with refugee and human rights advocates and had multiple Crossbench sponsors.





The Consumer Credit bill was developed in consultation with Financial Counselling Australia, who support Australians experiencing financial stress.

# ENVIRONMENT AND CONSUMER PROTECTION AMENDMENTS

- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Heritage Listing for the Bight) Bill 2019
- Live Sheep Long Haul Export Prohibition Bill 2019
- National Consumer Credit Protection Amendment (Small Amount Credit Contract and Consumer Lease Reforms) Bill 2019
  - Better regulates payday loans and rent-to-buy
- Competition and Consumer Amendment (Free Range Eggs) Bill 2018
- Fair Work Amendment (Recovering Unpaid Superannuation) Bill 2017

# PARLIAMENTARY SCRUTINY

The work of the Government is subject to scrutiny through:

## Inside Parliament

- Parliamentary committees
- Senate Estimates
- Question Time
- Questions in Writing
- Parliamentary debate
- Speeches and motions

## External to Parliament

- Media commentary
- Freedom of Information applications





# PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE

- Proceedings in Parliament are protected by Parliamentary Privilege
- Originally inherited from the UK House of Commons
- Helps to ensure Parliamentarians can speak freely
- Associated protections reduce the further a Member is from the Chamber.





Any Questions?





# WANT TO KNOW MORE? MORE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE

Unit 3, 22-28 Hutchinson Street

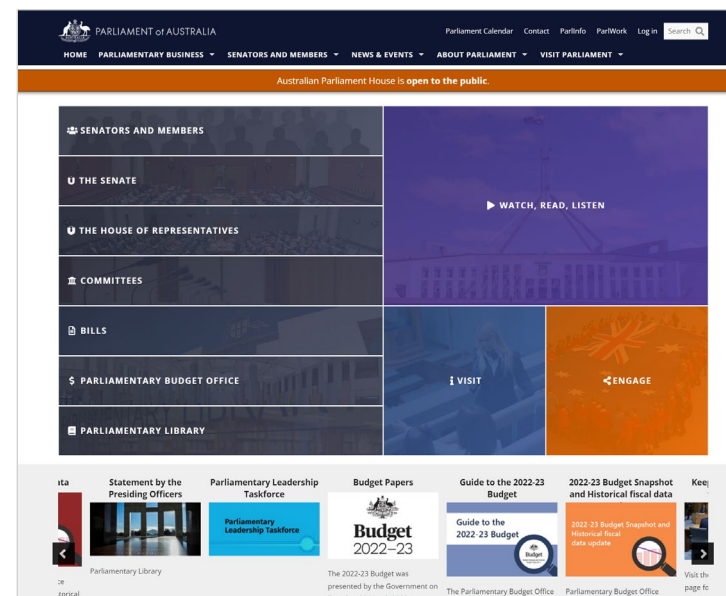
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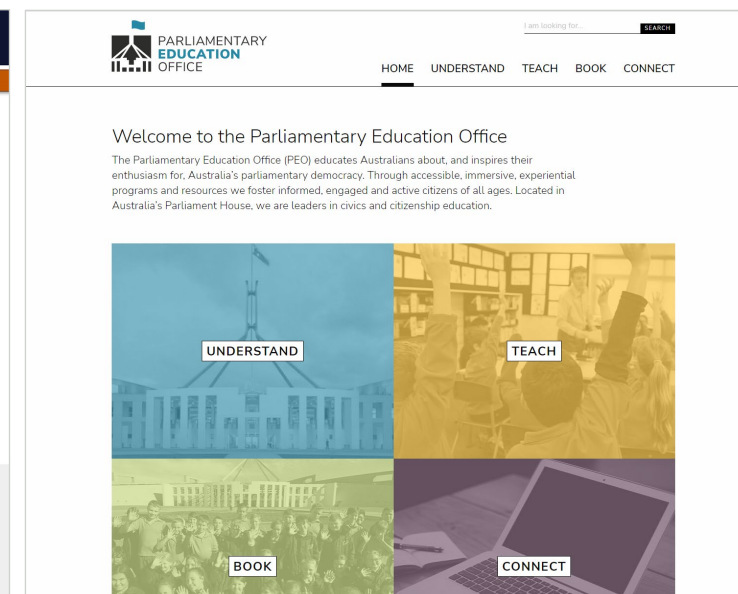
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