



## **BACKGROUND**

Petitioning Parliament is a long-established fundamental right of all citizens. It allows any individual or group to place grievances before the Parliament. It is one of the few direct means of communication between people and the Parliament.

## **WHAT IS A PETITION?**

A petition is a request for action. Any citizen, or group of citizens, may petition either House of Parliament requesting that action on a particular matter be taken.

## **WHAT CAN A PETITION ASK FOR?**

The subject of a petition must be a matter on which the Parliament has the power to act. Usually something that the State Government has responsibility for. Examples of petitions presented to the House of Assembly in the last decade include - a request that the Government not close the Repatriation General Hospital; that the Government extend the train line from Noarlunga to Seaford and Aldinga Beach; and that ongoing funding arrangements for the management and operation of the Hopgood Theatre be continued.

## **RULES FOR PETITIONS**

In order to be presented to the House of Assembly, petitions must be in the correct format and comply with the rules set by the House of Assembly Standing Orders. Petitions that do not comply with the rules will not be accepted. Please refer to the attached *Rules for Petitions* before preparing your petition and/or speak with the Contact Officer (refer details below). A *Petition Proforma* and a *Sample Petition* to assist in developing your petition is also attached.

## **HAVING YOUR PETITION PRESENTED**

A petition can only be presented to the House by a Member of that House. This can be any Member of Parliament (MP), including a Minister, and does not have to be the petitioner's local MP. Contact details for the current House of Assembly MPs who can be approached to present a petition is available on the [Parliament's website](#).

## **AFTER THE PETITION IS PRESENTED**

Petitions are announced by the Clerk of the House as one of the first items of routine business after 2.00 pm on each sitting day. The Clerk announces the electorate of the MP presenting the petition, the number of signatories and summary of the request made. Petitions are not debated at the time of tabling.

On presentation to the Parliament the petition becomes a public document and can be viewed by anyone upon request. Standing Orders also require that the Clerk of the House refer the petition to the Minister responsible for the matters raised. Ministers may respond to a petition in any way they see fit, for example by writing to the petitioners or a selection of them, or by ordering some administrative action to be taken.

## **PETITIONS OVER 10,000 SIGNATURES**

A single petition with over 10,000 signatures will be referred to the Legislative Review Committee. The Committee is required to investigate the petition and report back to both Houses. The

responsible Minister in each House is then required to table a response and make a statement outlining what, if any, action is to be taken in relation to the petition.

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

Any questions relating to the appropriate form of a petition, preferably before its circulation for signatures, should be directed to the Procedure Office of the House of Assembly or Legislative Council:

**Contact Officer - House of Assembly**

Ph: 08 8237 9206

Email: [procedure@parliament.sa.gov.au](mailto:procedure@parliament.sa.gov.au)

# RULES FOR PETITIONS

## Format of your Petition

1	<b>Must be addressed to Parliament</b>	Every Petition to be presented to the House of Assembly <u>must</u> begin with the words “ <i>To the Honourable the Members of the House of Assembly in Parliament Assembled</i> ”. <u>This statement must appear on every page of the Petition.</u>
2	<b>Must contain a Request</b>	Every Petition <u>must</u> contain a Request which sets out what your issue is and what action you are requesting that Parliament takes. <u>This Request must appear on every page of the Petition.</u>

## Content of your Petition

3	<b>Must use polite and respectful language</b>	A Petition <u>must</u> use polite and respectful language.
4	<b>Must not reference debates in Parliament</b>	A Petition <u>must</u> not reference a Member’s contribution to a debate which has taken place in Parliament.
5	<b>Must be legible</b>	A Petition may be hand-written, typed or printed but <u>must</u> be legible.
6	<b>Must be in English</b>	A Petition <u>must</u> be in English or be accompanied by an English translation certified to be correct by the Member who lodges it.
7	<b>Cannot include attachments</b>	No letters, affidavits or other documents may be attached to a Petition.

## Petition Signatures

8	<b>Must be signed</b>	A Petition <u>must</u> be signed. The minimum number of signatures is one.
9	<b>Signatures must be original (no copies)</b>	Each signature included on a Petition <u>must</u> be original. <u>Copies or facsimiles of signatures are not acceptable.</u> <u>Signatures cannot be pasted or otherwise transferred to the Petition.</u> Corporations contributing to Petitions must do so under their Common Seal.

## Presentation of your Petition

10	<b>Must be presented by a Member</b>	Petitions can only be lodged for presentation to the House by a Member of that House. Once you have a completed Petition please contact an MP to arrange for presentation to Parliament. House of Assembly MP contact details can be found on the <a href="#">Parliament website</a> .
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