



**REPORT OF THE**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON**  
**CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS**

**IN RELATION TO**

**A PETITION REQUESTING ACTION**  
**TO CUT FUEL COSTS**

Presented by Hon Murray Nixon JP, MLC (Chairman)

Report 59

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

### **Date first appointed:**

December 21 1989

### **Terms of Reference:**

- 1 The functions of the committee are to inquire into and report on:
  - a) the constitutional law, customs and usages of Western Australia;
  - b) the constitutional or legal relationships between Western Australia and the Commonwealth, the States and Territories,  
and any related matter or issue;
  - c) a bill to which SO 230 (c) applies but subject to SO 230 (d);
  - d) any petition.
- 2 A petition stands referred after presentation. The committee may refer a petition to another standing committee where the subject matter of the petition is within the terms of reference of that standing committee. A standing committee to which a petition is referred shall report to the House as it thinks fit.

### **Members as at the time of this inquiry:**

Hon Murray Nixon JP MLC (Chairman)  
Hon Ray Halligan MLC  
Hon Ken Travers MLC

### **Staff as at the time of this inquiry:**

Ms Felicity Beattie, Advisory Officer  
Mr David Driscoll, Committee Clerk

### **Address:**

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## **Government Response**

This Report is subject to Standing Order 337:

*After tabling, the Clerk shall send a copy of a report recommending action by, or seeking a response from, the Government to the responsible Minister. The Leader of the Government or the Minister (if a Member of the Council) shall report the Government's response within 4 months.*

The four-month period commences on the date of tabling.



## **CONTENTS**

1	INTRODUCTION .....	1
2	THE COMMITTEE’S RESPONSE TO THE PETITION.....	1
3	RECOMMENDATIONS .....	2



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**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 On October 10 2000 Hon Murray Criddle MLC tabled a petition (*Tabled Paper #335*) requesting action to cut fuel costs.
- 1.2 The petitioners expressed their opposition to the spiralling cost of fuel, particularly the tax and excise component of that increased cost.
- 1.3 The petitioners requested that the Legislative Council recommend that the State Government of Western Australia bring to the attention of the Commonwealth Government the following concerns of Western Australian residents:

*The need to:*

- (a) The need to [sic] reduce fuel excise to benefit all Australians;*
- (b) Suspend the CPI excise adjustment in February 2001;*
- (c) Review the alignment of Australian crude oil to world parity pricing;*
- (d) Protection of [sic] the role for small business retailers of petrol; and*
- (e) Have price competition and transparency at the wholesale level.*

- 1.4 The petition contained 11, 223 signatures. The principal petitioner was Mr Peter Fitzpatrick AM, Executive Director of the Motor Trade Association of Western Australia (Inc.).

**2 THE COMMITTEE'S RESPONSE TO THE PETITION**

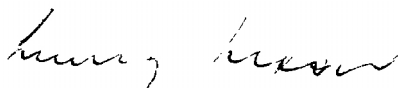
- 2.1 The Committee notes that the Select Committee on Pricing of Petroleum Products tabled its report *Getting a Fair Deal for Western Australian Motorists* in the Legislative Assembly on October 12 2000. The Committee believes that the matters raised in the petition have been substantially dealt with in the Select Committee report.

- 2.2 Consequently, the Committee believed it was not necessary to hold any public hearings into this matter.
- 2.3 The Committee also notes the actions of the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition supporting a number of issues raised in the petition.
- 2.4 The Committee is of the view that these matters are of concern to many Western Australians.

### **3 RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation:** The Committee recommends that the State Government of Western Australia reiterate to the Commonwealth Government the concerns of many Western Australians relating to the need to:

- reduce fuel excise to benefit all Australians;
- suspend the CPI excise adjustment in February 2001;
- review the alignment of Australian crude oil to world parity pricing;
- protect the role of small business retailers of petrol; and
- have price competition and transparency at the wholesale level.



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**Hon Murray Nixon JP, MLC**

**Chairman**

**Date: November 14 2000**