

PUBLIC



13 January 2009

Hon Mr Nick Griffiths LL B MLC
Chairman
Select Committee into the Appropriateness of Powers and Penalties
For Breaches of Parliamentary Privilege and Contempts of Parliament –
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Harvest Terrace
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Nick

I provide the following brief submission to the Select Committee into the Appropriateness of Powers and Penalties for Breaches of Parliamentary Privilege and Contempts of Parliament.

I suggest that the Parliament of Western Australia, rather than focussing on linkages to the United Kingdom's House of Commons, the House of Representatives, or any other body in the matter of Privilege, create a clear, unambiguous legislative format for Members of Parliament so that they are free from the threat of defamation.

Other strategies, in my view, will simply create a legal minefield and do nothing to demystify what privilege is, or what it means in practice (the "black hole" of privilege).

Any attempt at codification of rights/privileges beyond a clear, simple protection from defamation will be fraught with problems because of inevitable changes in society, including values and technology.

Yours sincerely

Bob Such MP JP
Member for Fisher
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