

# Media Release



## Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee

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(Barron River)

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(Hervey Bay)

**Mr Ian Rickuss MP**  
(Lockyer)

### SECRETARIAT

**LCARC**  
Parliamentary Annexe  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Phone: (07) 3406 7307

Fax: (07) 3406 7070

Email: [lcarc@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:lcarc@parliament.qld.gov.au)

Young people aged 12 to 25 will have the chance to have their views heard by a parliamentary committee at a workshop being held in Toowoomba on Friday, 23 September.

The Legal and Constitutional Committee of the Queensland Parliament wants to hear from young people about ways to increase their participation in democratic processes.

The workshop is the first in a series of nine workshops the committee is holding as part of its *Voices and Votes* inquiry into young people engaging in democracy in Queensland.

The Toowoomba workshop will be facilitated by committee chair, Dr Lesley Clark MP, and committee members Mr Ian Rickuss MP and Mr Ronan Lee MP.

Dr Clark says that, although young people's lives are affected by decisions made by government and by the laws which govern our society, some young people feel they don't know enough about politics or how to influence government decision-making. Others feel ignored and left out by politicians.

At the last State election some 52,000 young people aged between 18 and 20 who were eligible to vote chose not to.

Dr Clark stressed the importance of young people's involvement in democracy: "Young people are active in their communities, but are participating less in formal democratic processes than people in previous generations. This has to change. If this trend continues, over time there will be a significant decrease in the number of people participating in democracy in Queensland."

Topics for discussion at the workshop include:

- what assistance young people need to become more active in democracy;
- what action young people take on issues that are important to them;
- ways politicians can better engage with young people;
- ways governments and political parties can provide better information and involve young people in decision-making;
- ways schools can better model democracy;
- whether enrolment to vote should be automatic; and
- whether the voting age should be lowered.

The workshop will be held at the Jacaranda Conference Rooms, Rooftop Level, Grand Central Plaza from 10 am-12 noon. Young people, and those associated with young people's organisations, who would like to be involved are urged to register with the committee on 1800 504 022 by Thursday, 22 September 2005.

**Editor's notes:**

- The Legal and Constitutional Committee is a permanent statutory committee of the Queensland Parliament with a broad range of law reform responsibilities including administrative review reform, constitutional reform, electoral reform, and legal reform.
- The committee has also produced a range of publications, including a multi-media CD Rom. These provide information about young people engaging in democracy in Queensland, with the aim of encouraging discussion, public debate and submissions to the committee's inquiry.
- Other workshops will be held in Rockhampton (7 October), Gladstone (11 October), Sunshine Coast (13 October), Brisbane (13 October), Hervey Bay (17 October), Townsville (18 October), Charters Towers (18 October) and Cairns (19 October).
- Further information, including committee publications, is available from: [www.parliament.qld.gov.au/LCARC](http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/LCARC)
- Dr Clark is available for interview. Please call (07) 4038 2800.
- For further information about the committee's inquiry please contact Julie Copley at the committee secretariat on (07) 3406 7244.
- An electronic version of the picture below is available on request – please call (07) 3406 7307.

