

9 September, 2019

Ms Clair Siva
Committee Clerk
Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations
Legislative Council Parliament House,
GPO Box A11, PERTH WA 6837

Dear Ms Siva,

Please accept this submission relating to the establishment of a West Australian Parliamentary Budget Office.

The Greens support the establishment of a PBO and believe, if structured properly, it has the potential to significantly enhance Western Australia's parliamentary democracy and generate better-informed public debate.

Based on the experience of the Australian Greens within the federal jurisdiction, an independent budget office which reports to Parliament instead of the executive and has responsibility for costing the policy platforms of oppositions and smaller parties has tremendously enhanced the democratic process.

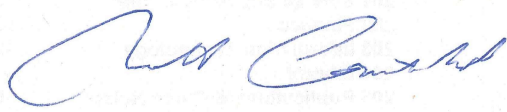
Operating since 2012, the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) has responsibility for both preparing confidential policies developed by parties or Members of Parliament and for costing the policies announced during an election campaign.

Not only has this process removed the 'budget-black-hole' debates that accompanied every election, but it has also enhanced the policy development process of political parties and has improved public debate that surround the details of policies put forward by competing parties.

The legislative and operational template of the PBO should be the primary point of reference for Western Australia to adopt a similar institution. After seven years in operation it has refined its internal processes and has withstood both political and economic tests. It is the model that should – so far as practicable – be adopted by the State of Western Australia.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this important democratic development.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brett Constable". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brett" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Constable".

Brett Constable
National Manager
P. 02 6140 3219
E. brett.constable@greens.org.au