

1988

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (QUORUM) BILL 1988

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

(Circulated by authority of the Leader of the House, the  
Hon. Kim C. Beazley, MP)

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (QUORUM) BILL 1988

### OUTLINE

The Bill provides for the quorum of the House of Representatives to be one-fifth of the whole number of the members of the House of Representatives.

Section 39 of the Constitution provides that -

Until the Parliament otherwise provides, the presence of at least one-third of the whole number of the members of the House of Representatives shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the House for the exercise of its powers.

On 9 December 1987 the House of Representatives resolved to -

endorse in principle the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Procedure that legislation action be taken to reduce the quorum of the House from one-third of the Members to one-fifth and requests the Government to introduce legislation to achieve this end.

The effect of the bill is to reduce the number of members required to constitute a meeting of the House for the House to exercise its powers from 50 members (one-third of the total number of 148) to 30 members (one-fifth of the total number).

#### Financial Impact Statement

The Bill has no financial impact on the operations of the House of Representatives.

## NOTES ON CLAUSES

### Clause 1 - Short Title

The clause provides for the citation of the Act.

### Clause 2 - Commencement

Clause 2 provides for the Act to commence on the day after the day on which it receives the Royal Assent.

### Clause 3 - Quorum

Clause 3 provides that the quorum for the House shall be one-fifth of the whole number of the members of the House of Representatives.

Section 39 of the Constitution provides that until Parliament otherwise provides, one-third of the whole number of the members of the House of Representatives shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the House for the exercise of its powers. The effect of the Clause is to reduce the quorum to one-fifth thus requiring the presence of 30 members, rather than 50 members, of the House of Representatives for a meeting of the House to exercise its powers.

