From the Editor

It is a pleasure to introduce Volume 41, Number 2 of the *Australasian Parliamentary Review*, a collection that brings together timely scholarship on some of the most pressing questions facing contemporary parliaments: how they respond to disruption, how they scrutinise power, and how they maintain public trust while adapting to changing democratic expectations. Drawing on contributions from parliamentary practitioners, scholars and legal experts, this issue highlights the continuing relevance of parliamentary institutions in an era marked by political polarisation, social change and renewed scrutiny of democratic processes.

The articles in this edition invite readers to examine parliament not as a static institution, but as one constantly negotiating competing values and responsibilities. Questions of order and dissent emerge prominently throughout the volume. Iva Glisic's examination of parliamentary protest considers the growing phenomenon of parliamentary disobedience and the challenges it poses for established procedural norms. At the same time, several contributions explore the boundaries of parliamentary privilege and institutional autonomy, including Alistair Sage's analysis of recent Canadian jurisprudence, Evan Smith's discussion of workplace health and safety regulation within parliamentary precincts, and Jessica Summers' thoughtful consideration of parliamentary privilege in the context of child-safety reporting obligations. Together, these papers demonstrate that debates about privilege, accountability and institutional legitimacy remain central to the contemporary parliamentary project.

A second theme running through this issue is the evolving role of parliamentary scrutiny. Matthew Kowaluk's article considers whether the Senate Scrutiny of Bills Committee might adopt a more expansive, pre-introduction approach to legislative review, while Jennefer Bagaporo explores parliamentary committees as sites of public engagement and democratic participation. Focusing on the experiences of vulnerable witnesses in South Australian parliamentary inquiries, Bagaporo highlights the importance of care, trust and accessibility in strengthening committee effectiveness and public confidence. Jessie Halligan examines the complex role of parliamentary committees through a case study of the New South Wales inquiry into past adoption practices, exploring the often difficult balance between transparency, accountability and the protection of individual privacy, and highlighting the long-term consequences that procedural decisions can have for public understanding and historical memory.

The issue also offers important comparative and international perspectives. Leslie Gonye's commentary on the 2026 Hungarian election examines parliamentary democracy in the context of democratic backsliding and institutional resilience, while Paul Williams' analysis of the 2024 Queensland election revisits the enduring influence of regional political cultures and electoral geography on parliamentary representation. These contributions reinforce the value of comparative parliamentary scholarship in understanding both the common challenges and the distinctive characteristics of legislative institutions.

This issue also features two book reviews. I review Charlie Feldman's *Unparliamentary: Tales from Canada's Colourful Parliamentary Past*, a lively account of some of the most memorable

episodes, personalities and controversies to have shaped the Canadian parliamentary tradition. David Clune reviews *Whitlam Right and Wrong: Personal Reflections*, edited by Michael Easson, a collection of essays reflecting on the legacy of the Whitlam Government more than fifty years after its election.

As always, the *Australasian Parliamentary Review* seeks to provide a forum where academic scholarship and parliamentary practice can engage in productive dialogue. The contributions in this volume reflect the richness of parliamentary studies as an interdisciplinary field and demonstrate the continuing value of evidence-based analysis of parliamentary institutions, procedures and culture. At a time when trust in democratic institutions cannot be taken for granted, careful examination of how parliaments operate, adapt and respond to public expectations remains more important than ever.

I extend my sincere thanks to all contributors and reviewers for their thoughtful scholarship and for the depth of insight that practitioner experience brings to this volume.



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