

Explanatory note

This explanatory note relates to this Bill as introduced into Parliament.

Overview of Bill

The objects of this Bill are:

(a) to require the Auditor-General to review Treasury costings of election promises, and

(b) to require an independent financial consultant, nominated by the Auditor-General, to be engaged by the Secretary of the Treasury for the purposes of assisting the Secretary in preparing Treasury costings and budget impact statements.

Outline of provisions

Clause 1 sets out the name (also called the short title) of the proposed Act.

Clause 2 provides for the commencement of the proposed Act on the date of assent to the proposed Act.

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Charter of Budget Honesty (Election Promises Costing) Amendment Bill 2010

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Schedule 1 Amendment of Charter of Budget

Honesty (Election Promises Costing) Act

2006 No 89

Review of Treasury costings by Auditor-General

Schedule 1 [9] requires the Auditor-General to review Treasury costings and budget impact statements and to prepare reports of the reviews for public release. Schedule 1 [4] provides that the Secretary of the Treasury is to provide the report of the review of a Treasury costing to the Premier or the Leader of the Opposition (as the case requires). Schedule 1 [5] provides that when a Treasury costing is publicly released by the Secretary of the Treasury, it is to be accompanied by the Auditor-General's report of the review of the costing. Schedule 1 [7] provides that the report of the review of the budget impact statements is to be included in the budget impact statements that are publicly released by the Secretary of the Treasury on the fifth last day before a State election.

Under the amendments, the Secretary of the Treasury is to provide costing requests and proposed Treasury costings to the Auditor-General and is to ensure that the Auditor-General has access to other necessary information for the purpose of conducting a review. If the Auditor-General needs more information about a policy for the purpose of a review, the Secretary of the Treasury is to ask the Premier or the Leader of the Opposition (as the case requires) to provide that information.

Schedule 1 [2] inserts a note to the definition of Treasury costing to the effect that Treasury costings and budget impact statements are required to be reviewed by the Auditor-General. Schedule 1 [8] inserts a note stating that the Auditor-General must provide a report of the review of the Treasury costings and budget impact statements for inclusion in the budget impact statements.

Independent financial consultant

Schedule 1 [10] provides that the Secretary of the Treasury is to engage a person or body with financial expertise (referred to as an independent financial consultant) to assist the Secretary in the preparation of Treasury costings and budget impact statements. The independent financial consultant is to be nominated by the Auditor-General. The consultant must not be a public authority, a public official or an official of a political party.

Confidentiality of information and documents relating to Treasury costings

Schedule 1 [11]–[17] provide that the information and documents that cannot be disclosed will be extended to include information and documents relating to a review by the Auditor-General. The prohibition on the Secretary of the Treasury or members

of Treasury staff disclosing such information or documents will be extended so that the Auditor-General and the independent financial consultant and their staff are also prohibited from disclosing the information and documents.

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Other amendments

Schedule 1 [18] enables the Secretary of the Treasury to revise a Treasury costing or budget impact statement to correct any errors identified by a review by the Auditor-General.

Schedule 1 [3], [6] and [8] replace notes that referred to relevant dates in relation to the 2007 State election with the relevant dates for the upcoming 2011 State election.

Schedule 1 [1] inserts relevant definitions.