

**INQUIRY INTO THE MACEDONIAN ORTHODOX
CHURCH PROPERTY TRUST BILL 2010**

Organisation: Macedonian Orthodox Community of Newcastle and District
Date Received: 26 July 2010

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MACEDONIAN ORTHODOX COMMUNITY

(OF NEWCASTLE AND DISTRICT)

МАКЕДОНСКА ПРАВОСЛАВНА ОПШТИНА

SCHOOL STREET, BROADMEADOW. 2292
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The General Purpose Standing Committee No.3
Legislative Council, Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:
P.O. BOX 79, HAMILTON. 2303
NEW SOUTH WALES.
AUSTRALIA

21 July 2010

Dear Sirs/Madam

RE: Inquiry into the Macedonian Orthodox Church Property Trust Bill 2010

We are writing on behalf of the Macedonian Orthodox Community of Newcastle and District. We **OPPOSE** the passing of the proposed Macedonian Orthodox Church Property Trust Bill 2010 ("the Bill").

We would like to make the following submissions in opposition to the Bill: -

1. The Bill has been presented to Parliament without proper consultation with the Macedonian Community of Newcastle and District and other Macedonian Communities;
2. We believe the object of the Bill is to empower the Macedonian Orthodox Church in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia, through the control of the Bishop of the Macedonian Orthodox Church Diocese of Australia and New Zealand to set up an establishment that will essentially be allowed to govern the property of the Macedonian Communities. This will deny the Macedonian Communities the right to own and manage the properties that the communities have worked hard to acquire.
3. The Macedonian Community of Newcastle and District currently has over 160 members and was formed more than 50 years ago as a community organization

with volunteers within the local community who contributed to the construction of our community hall and Church. Our Church was built in approximately 1969 where over 12 of our members risked their own homes by taking out mortgages to cover some of the construction costs. All monies and labour for the construction and continued maintenance of our Church are donated by our community members. We have not received any financial or other assistance from the Macedonian Church Diocese of Macedonia or any individual Bishop.

4. The property owned by the Macedonian Community of Newcastle and District is not only used for religious purposes, but we also use it for pensioner groups, day care, dancing groups, women groups, sporting groups, fund raising and a Macedonian school to teach the language and culture.
5. The Macedonian Orthodox Community of Newcastle and District is run by volunteers. We have elections every 2 years for the committee. Our community members, hard working Australian-Macedonians, have spent a lot of their time and money on our Church and believe it is a vital aspect of our Community.
6. We believe that the Bill in its present form will take the Communities rights away in relation to the management of the Community property and will ultimately avoid accountability and scrutiny which currently exists under Australian Laws.

We ask that you consider our submissions and oppose the Macedonian Orthodox Church Property Trust Bill 2010.

Yours faithfully



Krste Topovski

President of the

Macedonian Orthodox

Community of Newcastle and District



Dimitar Vangelov

Secretary of the

Macedonian Orthodox

Community of Newcastle and District