

# Media Release: Senator fears a one sided inquiry 20/05/2013

May 19, 2013 By [Laura Methorst](#)

Media release

## **Senator fears a one sided inquiry**

\*\*\*For immediate release\*\*\*

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DLP Senator for Victoria, John Madigan, has expressed concerns over the limited, elitist character of the public hearings conducted by the Inquiry into Australia's relationship with East Timor.

The inquiry, run by the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, received 72 submissions from community groups and individuals, many of whom have extensive in-country experience and long-standing ties with our neighbour.

Despite this, opportunities to appear at public inquiries were extended almost exclusively to a narrow group of insiders and bureaucrats.

"Ordinary Australians from all walks of life with a strong interest in East Timor appear to have been overlooked. Where are their invitations?" Senator Madigan asked.

"Australians who have formed Friendship Groups with the East Timorese people know a fair bit about conditions on the ground. It is most unfortunate that the Committee hasn't seen fit to invite them to the hearings."

"It makes a sham of the whole consultation process. The Democratic Labor Party is committed to genuine public input."

Senator Madigan has just returned from a self funded fact-finding visit to East Timor, where he met a wide range of people and groups. He has often spoken out in favour of Australia's responsibility to be a better neighbour to East Timor.