



Policy costing

Cost of increasing the size of Parliament																
Person/party requesting the costing:	Senator the Hon James McGrath, Liberal National Party of Queensland															
Date costing completed:	26 March 2026															
Expiry date of the costing:	Release of the next economic and fiscal outlook report.															
Status at time of request:	Submitted outside the caretaker period															
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Confidential – Authorised for public release on 8 nd April 2026 <input type="checkbox"/> Not confidential															
<p>Summary of proposal:</p> <p>The 48th Parliament comprises 150 Members of Parliament in the House of Representatives and 76 Senators (12 from each state and 2 from each territory).</p> <p>The proposal would increase the number of House of Representatives and Senate positions by:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Option</th> <th>Additional Members of Parliament (MPs)</th> <th>Additional Senators for States</th> <th>Additional Senators for Territories</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>24</td> <td>12 (an additional 2 senators per state)</td> <td>2 (an additional one senator per territory)</td> <td>38</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>24</td> <td>12 (an additional 2 senators per state)</td> <td>-</td> <td>36</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The proposal would include additional funding for recurrent and capital expenditure to support the new parliamentarians, including modifications to Australian Parliament House (APH) and onboarding costs.</p> <p>The proposal would commence on 1 July 2028.</p>		Option	Additional Members of Parliament (MPs)	Additional Senators for States	Additional Senators for Territories	Total	1	24	12 (an additional 2 senators per state)	2 (an additional one senator per territory)	38	2	24	12 (an additional 2 senators per state)	-	36
Option	Additional Members of Parliament (MPs)	Additional Senators for States	Additional Senators for Territories	Total												
1	24	12 (an additional 2 senators per state)	2 (an additional one senator per territory)	38												
2	24	12 (an additional 2 senators per state)	-	36												

Overview

The proposal would be expected to decrease the fiscal balance by between \$85.5 million (Option 2) and \$89.9 million (Option 1) and decrease the underlying cash balance by between \$83.1 million (Option 2) and \$87.4 million (Option 1) over the 2025-26 Budget forward estimates period (see Table 1). This impact reflects an increase in departmental expenses associated with additional parliamentarians.

The underlying cash balance impacts differ slightly from the fiscal balance impacts due to lags between when expenses occur and when payments are made.

The proposal would be expected to have an impact beyond the 2025-26 Budget forward estimates period. A breakdown of the financial implications over the period to 2035-36 is provided at Attachment A.

The scope of financial implications presented in this costing is limited to:

- Salary and allowances provided to additional parliamentarians and staff directly employed by parliamentary offices.
- Parliamentary office expenses relating to travel, accommodation, employee costs, office administrative costs, transportation, and telecommunications.
- Additional use of parliamentary support services, including the Department of the Senate, the Department of the House of Representatives, the Department of Parliamentary Services, the Parliamentary Budget Office, and Parliamentary Workplace Support Services.
- Building expenses associated with the internal remodelling of Parliament House (APH) to accommodate additional parliamentarian offices.
- Costs associated with selected parliamentary support offices being relocated to other buildings to provide space for the additional parliamentarian offices within APH, including both one-off movement and outfitting costs, and ongoing additional operational expenses.

If implemented, the proposal would also likely result in further costs than those accounted for in this costing. The financial implications of this costing do not include anticipated additional costs such as:

- Additional Australian Electoral Commission expenses (e.g. electorate boundary changes and voting systems), or any additional expenses incurred by other Commonwealth agencies.
- Impacts of redundancy payments or compulsory termination, changes in parliamentary composition due to election periods or losses of office, or changes in allowances determined by the Remuneration Tribunal.
- Non-cash benefits and allowances provided to parliamentarians that may increase proportional to wage payments.

Table 1: Cost of increasing the size of Parliament – Financial implications (\$m)^{(a)(b)(c)}

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total to 2028-29
Option 1: Increase by 24 new MPs in the House of Representatives and 14 new Senators					
Fiscal balance	-	-	-	-89.9	-89.9
Underlying cash balance	-	-	-	-87.4	-87.4
Option 2: Increase by 24 new MPs in the House of Representatives and 12 new Senators					
Fiscal balance	-	-	-	-85.5	-85.5
Underlying cash balance	-	-	-	-83.1	-83.1

(a) A positive number represents an increase in the relevant budget balance; a negative number represents a decrease.

(b) PDI impacts are not included in the totals.

(c) Financial implications were rounded consistent with the PBO's rounding rules.¹

- Indicates nil.

¹ <https://www.pbo.gov.au/for-parliamentarians/how-we-analyse/pbo-rounding-rules>

Uncertainties

The financial impacts of the options in the proposal are highly sensitive to assumptions related to:

- Composition of parliament and volume/timespan of Senate, House and Joint Committees and other roles that attract additional remuneration.
- Composition of electorate and personal staff including pay grade and their employing Senator or Member's electorate location.
- Changes in the rates of travel expenditure, including family and overseas travel, which are not utilised equally amongst parliamentarians and will fluctuate between years.
- Additional expenses associated with the remodelling and renovation of APH to accommodate the additional parliamentarians, which are also dependent upon a range of factors such as historical significance, Parliamentary Service regulations, and structural requirements which may disproportionately increase the total cost.
- Availability and costs associated with selected parliamentary support offices being relocated to other buildings to provide space for the additional parliamentarian offices within APH.

Key assumptions

The Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) has made the following assumptions in costing this proposal.

- Salaries, allowances, superannuation entitlements and other payments would increase consistent with Wage Cost Index 3 (WCI3).
 - Electorate and personal staff costs would also grow in line with WCI3.
- Travel Expenditure, parliamentary business budgets, vehicle costs, and office costs would increase consistent with the Consumer Price Index (CPI).
- Each new parliamentarian's office would have the space to facilitate 7 parliamentarian staff plus the member, resulting in 304 (Option 1) and 288 (Option 2) staff needing accommodation in APH. This will have a flow on impact to other parliamentary departments and staff needed to relocate, including potential relocation outside of APH.
 - Office fit out and staff relocation costs estimates are based on historical costs.
- Each new parliamentarian would require around 1.2 full-time equivalent parliamentary service support staff.
- Approximately 16 m² of office rental space would be required per person that is relocated to other offices. This area allowance includes space for meeting rooms, various offices, and a kitchen and breakout area.
 - In 2028-29 rental office space would be approximately \$635 per m² and fit-out costs for parliamentary service staff would be approximately \$1,490 per m².
 - Rental costs of office spaces would increase at a rate of 3.5% per annum.
- Each additional parliamentarian would require office space within APH of approximately 92 m².
 - In 2028-29 the parliamentarian office fit-out cost would be \$3,800 per m².
 - All office spaces would have fit-out completed in the first year of the policy.
- Status of parliamentarians, their classification, engagement in committees, travel amount, and Cabinet composition, would remain consistent with average staffing levels between 2021 and 2023 across the medium-term period.
 - Expansion of parliament would not result in the creation of additional cabinet, shadow cabinet or committee positions. Any involvement of additional parliamentarians in these roles is assumed to occur through replacement of existing members, with no net increase in positions.

- Travel, including family and overseas travel costs, would be distributed equally among parliamentarians. This would include Comcar expenses and the allowance offered for Private Plated Vehicles, which is assumed to be taken up by all new parliamentarians.

Methodology

Data provided by the Department of the House of Representatives, the Department of the Senate, and the Department of Finance (Ministerial and Parliamentary Services) was used in conjunction with publicly available data on travel expenditure provided by the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority to create a profile for the overall cost of a parliamentarian.

- Salaries, allowances, superannuation entitlements, and other payments provided to Parliamentarians were projected across the costing period under the assumed growth rates discussed in *Key assumptions*.
- Additional staffing was then allocated for the parliamentary departments (the Department of Senate, the Department of House of Representatives, the Department of Parliamentary Services and the Parliamentary Budget Office) and the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service to cover the additional ongoing auxiliary support costs associated with the expansion of parliament.

Data provided by the Department of Parliamentary Services in conjunction with publicly available data on office fit-out costs was used to calculate the expenses associated with relocating and housing the staff that would accompany an increase the number of parliamentarians.

- Ongoing and non-going expenses relating to the relocation of parliamentary services staff were calculated by multiplying the amount per m² per staff member by the estimated additional staff that would be required to relocate.
 - Ongoing components were projected across the medium term under the assumed growth rates discussed in *Key assumptions*.
- Expenses associated with refitting APH to accommodate the additional parliamentarians' offices were calculated by creating a profile for the cost of a single high-end office fit out (as per *Key assumptions*) and multiplying by additional parliamentarians.

Data sources

Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (2023) [Expenditure Reports 2021-22](#), IPEA website, accessed 26 March 2026.

Apex Executive Interiors (2026) [Fit Out Cost Calculator](#), AEI website, accessed 26 March 2026.

The Department of Finance (Ministerial and Parliamentary Services) provided 2021-2023 data on the composition of electorate and personal staffing of members of parliament.

The Department of Parliamentary Services provided 2021-2023 data on office costs.

The Department of the House of Representatives provided 2021-2023 data on the wages and allowances of members of the House of Representatives.

The Department of the Senate provided 2021-2023 data on the wages and allowances of members of the Senate.

The Treasury provided indexation parameters as at the 2025-26 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO).

Attachment A – Cost of increasing the size of Parliament – Financial implications

Table A1: Cost of increasing the size of Parliament – Option 1: Increase by 24 new MPs in the House of Representatives and 14 new Senators – Fiscal balance (\$m) ^{(a)(b)}

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	2035-36	Total to 2028-29	Total to 2035-36
Expenses													
<i>Departmental</i>													
<i>Parliamentarian</i>	-	-	-	-56.5	-57.9	-59.3	-60.8	-62.3	-63.8	-65.3	-66.9	-56.5	-492.8
<i>Parliamentary Support</i>	-	-	-	-9.7	-9.8	-9.9	-10.1	-10.2	-10.3	-10.3	-10.5	-9.7	-80.8
<i>Building Costs</i>	-	-	-	-23.7	-3.0	-3.1	-3.2	-3.3	-3.4	-3.6	-3.7	-23.7	-47.0
Total – expenses	-	-	-	-89.9	-70.7	-72.3	-74.1	-75.8	-77.5	-79.2	-81.1	-89.9	-620.6
Total (excluding PDI)	-	-	-	-89.9	-70.7	-72.3	-74.1	-75.8	-77.5	-79.2	-81.1	-89.9	-620.6

(a) A positive number for the fiscal balance indicates an increase in revenue or a decrease in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A negative number for the fiscal balance indicates a decrease in revenue or an increase in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms.

(b) Financial implications were rounded consistent with the PBO’s rounding rules.²

- Indicates nil.

² <https://www.pbo.gov.au/for-parliamentarians/how-we-analyse/pbo-rounding-rules>

Table A2: Cost of increasing the size of Parliament – Option 1: Increase by 24 new MPs in the House of Representatives and 14 new Senators – Underlying cash balance (\$m) ^{(a)(b)}

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	2035-36	Total to 2028-29	Total to 2035-36
Payments													
<i>Departmental</i>													
<i>Parliamentarian</i>	-	-	-	-54.4	-57.9	-59.3	-60.7	-62.2	-63.7	-65.3	-66.9	-54.4	-490.4
<i>Parliamentary Support</i>	-	-	-	-9.3	-9.8	-9.9	-10.1	-10.2	-10.3	-10.3	-10.5	-9.3	-80.4
<i>Building Costs</i>	-	-	-	-23.7	-3.0	-3.1	-3.2	-3.3	-3.4	-3.6	-3.7	-23.7	-47.0
Total – payments	-	-	-	-87.4	-70.7	-72.3	-74.0	-75.7	-77.4	-79.2	-81.1	-87.4	-617.8
Total (excluding PDI)	-	-	-	-87.4	-70.7	-72.3	-74.0	-75.7	-77.4	-79.2	-81.1	-87.4	-617.8

(a) A positive number for the underlying cash balance indicates an increase in receipts or a decrease in payments or net capital investment in cash terms. A negative number for the underlying cash balance indicates a decrease in receipts or an increase in payments or net capital investment in cash terms.

(b) Financial implications were rounded consistent with the PBO’s rounding rules.³

- Indicates nil.

³ <https://www.pbo.gov.au/for-parliamentarians/how-we-analyse/pbo-rounding-rules>

Table A3: Cost of increasing the size of Parliament – Option 1: Increase by 24 new MPs in the House of Representatives and 14 new Senators – Memorandum item: Public Debt Interest (PDI) impacts – Fiscal and underlying cash balances (\$m) ^{(a)(b)(c)}

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	2035-36	Total to 2028-29	Total to 2035-36
<i>Fiscal balance</i>	-	-	-	-1.9	-5.6	-9.0	-12.7	-16.7	-20.9	-25.5	-30.3	-1.9	-122.6
<i>Underlying cash balance</i>	-	-	-	-1.4	-4.6	-8.1	-11.8	-15.6	-19.8	-24.3	-29.0	-1.4	-114.6

- (a) As this table is presented as a memorandum item, these figures are not reflected in the totals in the tables above. This is consistent with the approach taken in the budget where the budget impact of most measures is presented excluding the impact on PDI. If the reader would like a complete picture of the total aggregate, then these figures would need to be added to the figures above. For further information on government borrowing and financing please refer to the PBO’s online budget glossary.⁴
- (b) A positive number for the fiscal balance indicates an increase in revenue or a decrease in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A negative number for the fiscal balance indicates a decrease in revenue or an increase in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A positive number for the underlying cash balance indicates an increase in receipts or a decrease in payments or net capital investment in cash terms. A negative number for the underlying cash balance indicates a decrease in receipts or an increase in payments or net capital investment in cash terms.
- (c) Financial implications were rounded consistent with the PBO’s rounding rules.⁵
- Indicates nil.

⁴ [Online budget glossary – Parliament of Australia \(aph.gov.au\)](https://aph.gov.au/online-budget-glossary)

⁵ <https://www.pbo.gov.au/for-parliamentarians/how-we-analyse/pbo-rounding-rules>

Table A4: Cost of increasing the size of Parliament – Option 2: Increase by 24 new MPs in the House of Representatives and 12 new Senators – Fiscal balance (\$m)

(a)(b)

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	2035-36	Total to 2028-29	Total to 2035-36
Expenses													
<i>Departmental</i>													
<i>Parliamentarian</i>	-	-	-	-53.8	-55.1	-56.5	-57.9	-59.3	-60.7	-62.2	-63.7	-53.8	-469.2
<i>Parliamentary Support</i>	-	-	-	-9.2	-9.3	-9.4	-9.5	-9.7	-9.8	-9.9	-10.1	-9.2	-76.9
<i>Building Costs</i>	-	-	-	-22.5	-2.8	-2.9	-3.0	-3.1	-3.3	-3.4	-3.5	-22.5	-44.5
Total – expenses	-	-	-	-85.5	-67.2	-68.8	-70.4	-72.1	-73.8	-75.5	-77.3	-85.5	-590.6
Total (excluding PDI)	-	-	-	-85.5	-67.2	-68.8	-70.4	-72.1	-73.8	-75.5	-77.3	-85.5	-590.6

(a) A positive number for the fiscal balance indicates an increase in revenue or a decrease in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A negative number for the fiscal balance indicates a decrease in revenue or an increase in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms.

(b) Financial implications were rounded consistent with the PBO's rounding rules.⁶

- Indicates nil.

⁶ <https://www.pbo.gov.au/for-parliamentarians/how-we-analyse/pbo-rounding-rules>

Table A5: Cost of increasing the size of Parliament – Option 2: Increase by 24 new MPs in the House of Representatives and 12 new Senators – Underlying cash balance (\$m) ^{(a)(b)}

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	2035-36	Total to 2028-29	Total to 2035-36
Payments													
<i>Departmental</i>													
<i>Parliamentarian</i>	-	-	-	-51.8	-55.1	-56.4	-57.8	-59.2	-60.7	-62.1	-63.7	-51.8	-466.8
<i>Parliamentary Support</i>	-	-	-	-8.8	-9.3	-9.4	-9.5	-9.7	-9.8	-9.9	-10.1	-8.8	-76.5
<i>Building Costs</i>	-	-	-	-22.5	-2.8	-2.9	-3.0	-3.1	-3.3	-3.4	-3.5	-22.5	-44.5
Total – payments	-	-	-	-83.1	-67.2	-68.7	-70.3	-72.0	-73.8	-75.4	-77.3	-83.1	-587.8
Total (excluding PDI)	-	-	-	-83.1	-67.2	-68.7	-70.3	-72.0	-73.8	-75.4	-77.3	-83.1	-587.8

(a) A positive number for the underlying cash balance indicates an increase in receipts or a decrease in payments or net capital investment in cash terms. A negative number for the underlying cash balance indicates a decrease in receipts or an increase in payments or net capital investment in cash terms.

(b) Financial implications were rounded consistent with the PBO’s rounding rules.⁷

- Indicates nil.

⁷ <https://www.pbo.gov.au/for-parliamentarians/how-we-analyse/pbo-rounding-rules>

Table A6: Cost of increasing the size of Parliament – Option 2: Increase by 24 new MPs in the House of Representatives and 12 new Senators – Memorandum item: Public Debt Interest (PDI) impacts – Fiscal and underlying cash balances (\$m) ^{(a)(b)(c)}

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	2035-36	Total to 2028-29	Total to 2035-36
<i>Fiscal balance</i>	-	-	-	-1.9	-5.3	-8.6	-12.1	-15.9	-19.9	-24.2	-28.8	-1.9	-116.7
<i>Underlying cash balance</i>	-	-	-	-1.4	-4.4	-7.7	-11.2	-14.9	-18.8	-23.1	-27.6	-1.4	-109.1

- (a) As this table is presented as a memorandum item, these figures are not reflected in the totals in the tables above. This is consistent with the approach taken in the budget where the budget impact of most measures is presented excluding the impact on PDI. If the reader would like a complete picture of the total aggregate, then these figures would need to be added to the figures above. For further information on government borrowing and financing please refer to the PBO's online budget glossary.⁸
- (b) A positive number for the fiscal balance indicates an increase in revenue or a decrease in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A negative number for the fiscal balance indicates a decrease in revenue or an increase in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A positive number for the underlying cash balance indicates an increase in receipts or a decrease in payments or net capital investment in cash terms. A negative number for the underlying cash balance indicates a decrease in receipts or an increase in payments or net capital investment in cash terms.
- (c) Financial implications were rounded consistent with the PBO's rounding rules.⁹
- Indicates nil.

⁸ [Online budget glossary – Parliament of Australia \(aph.gov.au\)](https://aph.gov.au/online-budget-glossary)

⁹ <https://www.pbo.gov.au/for-parliamentarians/how-we-analyse/pbo-rounding-rules>