THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Australian Citizenship Amendment (Ceremony Integrity) Bill 2026

No. , 2026

A Bill for an Act to amend the Australian Citizenship Act 2007 to require non-partisan, simultaneous and constituent-based invitations to citizenship ceremonies, to confine additional ministerial invitations, to require an invitation register, and for related purposes

The Parliament of Australia enacts:

Part 1 — Preliminary

1 Short title

This Act is the Australian Citizenship Amendment (Ceremony Integrity) Act 2026.

2 Commencement

(1) Each provision of this Act specified in column 1 of the table commences, or is taken to have commenced, in accordance with column 2 of the table. Any other statement in column 2 has effect according to its terms.

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
Provisions	**Commencement**	**Date/Details**
1. The whole of this Act	The day after the end of the period of 28 days beginning on the day this Act receives the Royal Assent.	

(2) Any information in column 3 of the table is not part of this Act. Information may be inserted in this column, or information in it may be edited, in any published version of this Act.

3 Schedules

Legislation that is specified in a Schedule to this Act is amended or repealed as set out in the applicable items in the Schedule concerned, and any other item in a Schedule to this Act has effect according to its terms.

Schedule 1 — Amendment of the Australian Citizenship Act 2007

Australian Citizenship Act 2007

1 After section 27

Insert:

27A Ceremony integrity — simplified outline

This Division requires every citizenship ceremony at which a pledge of commitment is made to be conducted as a non-partisan civic welcome.

Official invitations must go, at the same time, to every House member whose constituents are being conferred, to the member for the venue, and to senators of the government, the Official Opposition and (where they exist) the remainder of the Senate, for the State or Territory of the venue.

Sitting members are invited before candidates. A Minister may add guests only after the mandatory list has gone out, and not so as to prefer a government colleague over a non-government member who has constituents in the room.

An invitation register is published after each ceremony. The Citizenship Ceremonies Code cannot undercut this Division.

27B Definitions

In this Division:

candidate means a person who has been nominated, or has publicly announced an intention to be nominated, as a candidate for election to the Parliament and who is not a sitting member.

Code means the Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code issued by the Minister, as in force from time to time.

conferree means a person who has been approved to become an Australian citizen under section 24 and who is scheduled to make a pledge of commitment at the ceremony.

departmental ceremony means a ceremony hosted or conducted by the Department or by a Minister.

government political party means a political party that is part of the Executive Government of the Commonwealth.

mandatory invitee has the meaning given by section 27D.

Official Opposition means the party or coalition recognised as such in the House of Representatives.

organiser means the person or body that conducts the ceremony, including the Department, a Minister, a local government council and a parliamentarian who hosts a ceremony.

sitting member means a senator or a member of the House of Representatives.

usual residential address of a conferree means the address recorded for the conferree on the approved application, unless the Department has a more recent address notified by the conferree.

27C Application

(1) This Division applies to every ceremony at which a pledge of commitment is made under section 27, whether the host is the Department, a Minister, a local government council, a parliamentarian or any other authorised person.

(2) This Division applies in addition to, and not in substitution for, sections 26 and 27 and the regulations about how a pledge is to be made.

(3) A provision of the Code that is inconsistent with this Division is of no effect to the extent of the inconsistency.

27D Mandatory invitees

(1) The organiser of a ceremony must invite each of the following persons as an official guest (a mandatory invitee):

(a) every member of the House of Representatives whose division includes the usual residential address of one or more conferrees at the ceremony;

(b) the member of the House of Representatives for the division in which the venue sits, whether or not a conferree from that division is present;

(c) at least one senator for the State or Territory in which the venue sits who is a member of a government political party;

(d) at least one senator for that State or Territory who is a member of the Official Opposition;

(e) if there is a senator for that State or Territory who is not a member of a government political party and is not a member of the Official Opposition — at least one such senator;

(f) the member of the Parliament of the State or Territory for the district in which the venue sits;

(g) the mayor (or equivalent) of the local government area in which the venue sits.

(2) If a class mentioned in paragraph (1)(c), (d) or (e) has more than one senator for the State or Territory, the organiser must invite the senator of that class who maintains an electorate office nearest the venue. If that senator declines or cannot be contacted after reasonable steps, the organiser must invite the next nearest senator of that class.

(3) The Minister must be invited to every ceremony. The Minister has precedence to preside if the Minister attends. That precedence does not authorise the Minister to omit a mandatory invitee or to delay a mandatory invitation.

(4) A mandatory invitee must not send a delegate to act in an official capacity on the invitee's behalf.

(5) If no senator of a class mentioned in paragraph (1)(c), (d) or (e) exists for the State or Territory, the duty in respect of that class does not apply.

27E Simultaneous invitation and equal notice

(1) The organiser must issue every mandatory invitation for a ceremony at the same time, by the same method, with the same information and with the same date by which a response is requested.

(2) A difference of more than 2 hours between the time the first mandatory invitation for a ceremony is issued and the time the last such invitation is issued is a failure to comply with subsection (1), unless the difference is caused by a documented systems outage.

(3) A mandatory invitation must be issued not later than 10 days before the ceremony, unless a conferree at the ceremony would otherwise be at risk of losing the right to make a pledge because of section 26.

(4) The unavailability of the Minister, or of a government member, is not a reason to shorten the period in subsection (3) or to stagger mandatory invitations.

(5) The Secretary must maintain a current official-contact register of every senator and member of the House of Representatives and must use it for the purposes of this Division. A mandatory invitation is not conditional on the invitee first requesting to be invited or first requesting the names of conferrees.

(6) If a person who is a mandatory invitee is identified after invitations have been issued, the organiser must issue the invitation immediately, extend the response date for that person, and record the omission and the reason on the register under section 27L.

27F Department to identify members with conferrees

(1) When the Department gives an organiser a list of conferrees for a ceremony, the Department must at the same time give the organiser a list of every member of the House of Representatives whose division

includes the usual residential address of one or more of those conferrees, and of every senator who is a mandatory invitee under section 27D for that ceremony.

(2) Subsection (1) applies whether or not the Department is the organiser.

27G Candidates and non-sitting persons

(1) An organiser must not invite a candidate as an official guest, or offer a candidate a speaking role or reserved official seating, unless every sitting member who is a mandatory invitee for the ceremony has already been invited in accordance with sections 27D and 27E.

(2) An organiser must not invite a candidate in substitution for a sitting member.

(3) This section does not prevent a candidate attending a public ceremony as a member of the public.

27H Additional invitations

(1) A Minister may invite a person who is not a mandatory invitee as an additional official guest.

(2) An additional invitation must not be issued unless every mandatory invitation for the ceremony has already been issued.

(3) An additional invitation must not give a member of a government political party, or a candidate endorsed by such a party, a speaking role, reserved official seating or earlier notice that is not also given to each non-government mandatory invitee at the same ceremony.

(4) Every additional invitation must be recorded on the register under section 27L.

27J Speaking roles

(1) A speaking role must be offered to every member of the House of Representatives who is a mandatory invitee because of paragraph 27D(1)(a) or (b).

(2) If the number of such members makes it impracticable for each of them to speak, speaking places are to be allocated in the following order:

(a) the member for the division in which the venue sits;

(b) other House members in descending order of the number of their conferrees at the ceremony;

(c) a senator who is a member of the Official Opposition;

(d) a senator who is not a member of a government political party and is not a member of the Official Opposition.

(3) A senator who is a member of a government political party must not be given a speaking place in preference to a House member mentioned in subsection (1) or a senator mentioned in paragraph (2)(c) or (d).

(4) An invitation to attend is not an invitation to preside. An invitation to preside must say so.

27K Conduct of official guests

(1) A speech by an official guest at a ceremony must be apolitical, bipartisan and secular.

(2) A person must not distribute at a ceremony material that is political, commercial or religious.

(3) Without limiting subsection (1), a speech is not apolitical if it names a political party as a reason to support or oppose a person, promotes how-to-vote material, describes the boundaries of an electoral division for a campaign purpose, or attacks another political party or candidate.

27L Invitation register

(1) The Secretary must keep a register for each ceremony in respect of which the Department is the organiser or for which the Department supplied the list of conferrees.

(2) The register must record:

(a) the date, time, venue and organiser;

(b) the number of conferrees, grouped by electoral division and by local government area;

(c) each mandatory invitee and the class in section 27D that applies to the invitee;

(d) the date and time each invitation was issued and the date by which a response was requested;

(e) whether the invitee attended;

(f) any speaking role offered, accepted, declined or withdrawn, and the reason for any withdrawal;

(g) any additional invitation issued under section 27H;

(h) the reason for any late or omitted mandatory invitation.

(3) The Secretary must publish the register on the Department's website within 10 business days after the ceremony, omitting information that would identify a conferree.

(4) The register must be kept for at least 7 years.

27M Venue, scheduling and concentrated programs

(1) The Department must not select a venue for a departmental ceremony for a purpose of preferring, or avoiding, a particular political party or sitting member.

(2) If the Department conducts a concentrated program of departmental ceremonies in any period of 60 days, the Secretary must take reasonable steps to offer equivalent scheduling to local government areas outside capital cities that have approved applicants waiting to make a pledge, and must explain in the report under section 27P any failure to do so.

(3) The Department must not schedule or delay a ceremony for the purpose of fitting the personal availability of a Minister who is not required to preside.

27N Election and caretaker period

(1) From the day the House of Representatives is dissolved until the day the writs for the general election are returned, a speaking role already offered to a sitting member must not be withdrawn on the ground of caretaker conventions, party affiliation, or the presence of a candidate.

(2) If guidance issued for a caretaker period requires speeches at a ceremony to be confined to a welcome, that confinement applies to every official speaker.

(3) The Department must not commence a concentrated program of departmental ceremonies in the period of 3 months before the first day on which a writ for a general election of the House of Representatives may be issued under section 32 of the Constitution, except to the extent necessary to allow a person to make a pledge before the end of the period mentioned in section 26.

27P Report to the Parliament

(1) The Minister must cause a report on the operation of this Division during a financial year to be prepared and to be tabled in each House of the Parliament within 3 months after the end of that year.

(2) The report must include:

(a) the number of ceremonies, conferrees and departmental ceremonies;

(b) a statement of each failure to comply with section 27E;

(c) a statement of each ceremony at which a class of mandatory invitee in section 27D was not invited;

(d) the number of additional invitations issued under section 27H, grouped by political party of the invitee;

(e) for a concentrated program of departmental ceremonies — the distribution of venues by the party of the member for the division in which the venue sat, and the explanation required by subsection 27M(2).

27Q Review

The Minister must cause an independent review of the operation of this Division to be commenced within 2 years after this section commences, and must cause the review report to be tabled in each House of the Parliament within 15 sitting days after the Minister receives it.

2 Application

Sections 27A to 27Q of the Australian Citizenship Act 2007, as inserted by this Schedule, apply to a ceremony that takes place on or after the commencement of this item.