

Petitions

What is a petition?

A petition is a document presented to the House of Assembly by an MLA on behalf of their constituents. It requests action by the House of Assembly or the government in power.

Note: The current *Rules and Forms of Procedure of the House of Assembly* do not permit electronic petitions.

Why is petitioning important?

Petitioning allows MLAs to get issues concerning their constituents into the public domain.

Who petitions the House of Assembly?

Anyone can submit a petition through their MLA.

What is in a petition?

Petitions contain a request for action (called a "prayer"). The request must ask the House of Assembly or government to do something that is within its constitutional powers. They can be either written or printed (not electronic) and signed by as few as one person. If there are three or more signatures, however, they must be on the first page with the prayer. The prayer should appear at the top of every page of a petition. There is no standard format. All petitions must bear original signatures. Photocopies of petitions or print-outs of Internet petitions are not acceptable. Similarly, boxes or bundles of printed e-mails are not accepted. The MLA presenting the petition is responsible for ensuring that its content is appropriate. The MLA must also endorse the petition being presented to show which MLA tabled it, even if the MLA does not agree with it.

How is a petition presented?

MLAs present petitions on behalf of their constituents. Usually petitions are presented in the House during the daily routine, then tabled, but they can also be filed directly with the Clerk at any time during a sitting. Once filed with the Clerk, petitions become part of the public record of the House.

MLAs are not compelled to present petitions and doing so does not imply personal support for the action requested.