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Sent: Monday, 28 January 2013 9:28 AM
To: Electoral Reform
Subject: Electoral Reform Discussion Paper

The following is a submission in accordance with the Electoral Reform Discussion Paper from :-
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Electoral Reform Discussion Paper
7. Compulsory Voting

Should compulsory voting remain for Queensland State Elections ?

All the recent comments on voting have been about the deficiencies in both compulsory and voluntary voting. Both systems are flawed. Why can't we look outside the square and create a voting system that allows our democracy to flourish ? A simple practical system without the need for major change to the law.

It can be done !

The answer lies in a mixture of compulsory and voluntary voting.
This would answer most of the criticisms of both compulsory and voluntary voting

It is reasonable to argue that most (but not all) young voters do not have sufficient experience or maturity to understand the importance of political issues.

It is also reasonable to argue that many (but not all) older voters lose interest in politics and through ill health and other issues struggle to vote. It is noted that voters over 65 in Ecuador cannot vote nor voters over 70 can vote in Brazil or Luxemborg. Local Government Elections in Victoria have voluntary voting for electors over 70 years of age.

The proposal is therefore to limit compulsory voting to voters in (say) the 30 to 70 years age group only. All other voters are able to vote voluntarily.

This would :-

1. ensure the votes of the more informed and mature voters in the Electorate
2. Have a core (Federally 67.9% in 2011) of compulsory electors sufficient to deter candidates and parties from focusing on getting their voters to the poll rather than focusing on the issues.
3. Reduce the number and percentage of uninformed or informal or protest or donkey votes from reluctant voters by them not being required to vote at all.
4. Probably ensure that the total formal vote is only reduced by an Estimated 10%.
5. Be a definite improvement on either compulsory or voluntary Voting per se.

The Electoral Office will have no difficulty in implementing these changes as it will be only after the election that they look at who hasn't voted in the 30/70 age group. They already have information on voters ages and it will be important to retain compulsory enrollments to maximize voter turnout. Legislation changes don't need a referendum.