

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 28 March 2013 10:29 AM
To: Electoral Reform
Subject: Emailing: Electoral Reform Green Paper Submission (2)

Attachments: Electoral Reform Green Paper Submission (2).docx



Electoral Reform
Green Paper S...

Please see attached my submission for the Electoral Reform Green Paper.

Kind regards,
Joyce Newton

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Electoral Reform Green Paper Response

1. Issues for consultation – Political donations

1 Are the existing laws in relation to political donations effective in protecting against the potential for undue influence and corruption? No

2 How can the existing laws in relation to political donations be made more effective? Change some of the laws, especially in respect to union donations to political parties.

Comment is invited, in particular on:

- whether political donations should continue to be capped in Queensland (option a);
Yes, they should be capped, but the cap should be doubled. To suggest that any influence can be bought for \$5 000 is just nonsense.
- if so, whether the cap should apply to all donations and not just those intended to be used for campaign purposes (option b);
Only campaign purpose donations should be capped. Donations outside the campaign period support political parties in their day to day work, such as policy development and candidate education.
- whether political donations should only be able to be made by individuals on the electoral roll (option c);
Agree
- if not, whether there should be additional member/shareholder endorsement requirements for receipt of donations from industrial organisations and corporations (option d);
- the treatment of fees for attendance at functions and fundraising activities (option e) and membership fees (option f);
Fees for attendance at functions and fundraising activities are pathetically low. Half of the current fees under the present situation are eaten up in costs. The treatment for fees for attendance at functions, fundraising activities, and membership fees should have a \$1 000 exemption per event.
- whether additional disclosure requirements should be introduced (option g);
No and
- whether there are any opportunities to streamline the existing administrative arrangements (for example by removing the requirement for dedicated campaign accounts (option h)).

Dedicated campaign accounts should continue to be mandatory. Non-dedicated campaign accounts would very quickly lead back to graft and corruption because of the lack of accountability and transparency.

2 Issues for consultation – Public funding of elections

Are the public funding arrangements in Queensland fair? No

Comment is invited, in particular on:

- whether public funding of political parties and candidates should be on a per vote basis (option (a)); Yes, based on first preference votes.
- whether a limit on public funding should be introduced that is based on the winning party's entitlement (option b); No
- whether a limit on public funding should be introduced that is based on the number of votes received (option c); No, each vote should be of equal value and
- whether there are any opportunities to streamline the existing administrative arrangements (option d). Existing administrative arrangements of using an agent are the most effective and simple. Everyone knows where the buck stops!

Public funding should be split into two categories:

A. Party Administration

Administration of political Parties develops sound policies, candidate support, and the provision of a state director to maintain the correct administration of monies.

Public funds for administrative purposes need to be provided to the political parties every six months.

B. Campaign Expenses

Campaign expenses needs to be paid on per vote basis at the end of the campaign and completion of campaign audit back to the relevant Party.

3. Issues for consultation – Election campaign expenditure

1 Are the existing laws relating to electoral expenditure effective in creating a more level playing field?

No

2 How can the existing laws in relation to electoral expenditure be made more effective?

Expenditure of a party should be aggregated with the expenditure of its affiliated organisations.

Comment is invited, in particular on:

whether electoral expenditure should continue to be capped in Queensland (options a and b);

Yes, electoral expenditure should continue to be capped.

whether the expenditure of a party should be aggregated with the expenditure of its affiliated organisations (option c); Yes

whether the expenditure of affiliated organisations should be aggregated (option d); Yes

whether the definition of ‘electoral expenditure’ should be clarified (option e); Clear, simple, unambiguous guidelines are needed, and not changed through the designated campaign period. Just saying whatever advocates for a vote was difficult at times to judge. I do not support the NSW guidelines.

the treatment of volunteer labour (option f); Those working in a full time capacity can only be considered volunteers when working outside of their normal working hours.
and

whether there are any opportunities to streamline the existing administrative arrangements (option g). To maintain the caps, disclosure and capping administration has to be handled by the relative parties with suitable accountability.

Part B—Other Options for Improvement and Change

1. Issue for consultation – Truth in political advertising

1 Should truth in political advertising legislation be introduced in Queensland? No, legislation does not force people to tell the truth and is too cumbersome.

2 If so, should it extend beyond advertisements to other inaccurate and misleading statements?

2. Issues for consultation – How-to-vote cards

Should how-to-vote cards be subject to increased regulation? Yes

If so, how? They should be published on the ECQ website. ECQ should have the power to refuse HTV cards that are deemed to be misleading or deceptive.

Comment is invited, in particular on:

whether how-to-vote cards should be published on the ECQ’s website (option a); Yes

whether the ECQ should have the power to refuse to register a how-to-vote card that is likely to mislead or deceive a voter in casting their vote (option b); Yes

whether the behaviour of workers who hand out how-to-vote cards should be regulated (option c); No, but an agreed code of conduct would be helpful and

whether how-to-vote cards should be banned (option d). No, they should not be banned. And putting them in polling booths is unworkable, especially for the senate.

3. Issue for consultation – Proof of identity

Should voters be required to produce proof of their identity on polling day? Yes, as simple as a medicare card. The electorate needs to be confident in the electoral results.

4. Issue for consultation – Enrolment on polling day

Should voters be permitted to enrol on polling day? No. Political parties and government spend multi millions talking about polling day, and there is no excuse for not being enrolled.

5. Issues for consultation – Electronic voting

Should electronic voting be introduced in Queensland? No, (see Queensland Health Department debacle.)

Comment is invited, in particular on:

whether Queensland should introduce electronically assisted voting for: blind and vision impaired voters; and voters who require assistance voting because of a disability, motor impairment or insufficient literacy (option a); No, already catered for with ECQ staff.

whether Queensland should introduce electronically assisted voting to voters who will not throughout the hours of polling on polling day be in Queensland and/or who do not reside within 20 kilometres, by the nearest practical route, of a polling place; No, already have pre-polling two weeks prior to and postal ballots or

whether electronically assisted voting should be introduced for all voters in Queensland. No

6. Issues for consultation - Postal voting

Are there any opportunities to improve the postal voting system? Yes, the Australia Postal Service is terribly slow, politically weighted, and generally obstructive.

Comment is invited, in particular on:

whether the grounds upon which a person can apply for a postal vote should be expanded (option a); Yes, I think they should be unlimited.

whether online postal vote applications should be permitted (option b); You can download application online, fill it out, sign, and email it back. Signature is imperative so confirmation of voter can be made when ballot arrives to electoral office.

whether the deadline for lodging a postal vote application should be brought forward by one day (option c). Yes, should be brought forward at least a couple days from the polling day. The current time restraints prevent the ECQ from processing and getting ballot papers to voters. Pre-polling has extended and now available for the last two weeks.

7. Issue for consultation – Compulsory voting

Should compulsory voting remain for Queensland State elections? Yes.

8. Issue for consultation – Voting system

Should the voting system used for Queensland State elections be changed? No

9 Any other matter

The options outlined in the paper are not intended to be exhaustive. If you think there are other options for improving Queensland's electoral laws, please include these in your submission.

- (1) Centralised banking by political parties is essential to prevent candidates becoming too close to political donors and campaign funds.
- (2) No public funds should be paid directly to candidates of political parties.
- (3) Members elected under a particular party banner and received campaign funds and support from this political party who then abandon their party affiliation during their term of office, should have to go back to the people via a bi-election to be re-endorsed. This is similar to truth in advertising. You can't advertise that you are one thing, and then change your affiliation once you are elected. Voters were misled as to whom they were supporting and donations to that candidate were not used for the purpose they were intended.

Term of office

- (1) Queensland needs to move as soon as possible to a four year term of office to allow for government to plan effectively and have time to deliver before focusing on the next election. Elections are costly, and many times in the past governments run no more than 2 and half years.
- (2) Fixed terms should also be reviewed as to the pros and cons. I believe the benefits outweigh the disadvantages. As a past campaign manager, it gives certainty and the chance to run a much better organised campaign. Always it is said that you are giving away an advantage of being in government, but for Queensland as a whole I believe it is better to have certainty than all the guessing games and waste of time and money. A good government should have nothing to fear.

Also, it would allow governments to choose a time when there is less chance of voting disruption, eg flood periods and overlapping with other elections.