

# The Saturday Paper

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NEWS

Labor and the Coalition have cooperated on electoral reforms targeting the use of private money – which will hit the funding models of challengers such as Clive Palmer and the teals.

By *Mike Secombe*.

## The bipartisan deal designed to thwart independents

Almost one in three voters cast their ballot for someone other than a Labor or Coalition candidate at the 2022 federal election – not that you could tell from the numbers in parliament.

Only one in nine members in the House of Representatives – 17 out of 151 – belongs to neither of the major party blocs. The Senate somewhat more closely reflects the will of the people, but its 19 non-major party members make up just a quarter of the total.

That's still enough to seriously put the wind up the big parties. They might not agree on much, but they are united in one goal: the preservation of their duopoly. Even as they fought the big fight over the referendum, they were quietly working towards a bipartisan position on a suite of reforms to the electoral system, designed to protect their dominance.

The expectation – based on the time line set by the Albanese government's special minister of state, Senator Don Farrell – is the proposals will be introduced in the few sitting weeks remaining this year. That way, there will be time to implement them before the next election.

<https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/politics/2023/10/14/the-bipartisan-deal-designed-thwart-independents>