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Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Committee Secretary

**Review of the Electoral Legislation Amendment
(Electoral Funding and Disclosure Reform) Act 2018**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback in response to the review of the *Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Funding and Disclosure Reform) Act 2018*.

By way of background, Foodbank Australia provided a brief submission in response to the initial *Inquiry into the Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Funding and Disclosure Reform) Bill 2017* back in January 2018, with a particular focus on Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) obligations in respect of advocacy. I note that the Committee's current focus includes the impacts of amendments to the original bill that are relevant to issue-based advocacy, which is of keen interest to Foodbank Australia.

Foodbank Australia exists to fight hunger in Australia. In addition to our day-to-day food relief activities, Foodbank plays a key role in times of community emergency and natural disasters. During COVID-19, we have scaled up and adapted our services to meet the changing needs of the evolving circumstances. Foodbank distributes essential food and groceries to more than 2,400 charities nationally, the majority of whom rank Foodbank as their organisation's most important source of food. Foodbank also supplies more than 2,500 school breakfast programs nationally.

As stated in our previous submission, advocacy is central to our purpose, and enables Foodbank to seek policy solutions to the symptoms of food insecurity in Australia. It also allows us to speak with authority on the needs of the food relief sector, and our role as an enabler to emergency relief providers right across the country. The latter has never been more important than in the last 12 months, where Foodbank has been pivotal in ensuring emergency food relief could be provided during the most challenging of circumstances, including periods of significant disruption to food and grocery supply chains. Foodbank Australia continues to represent the food relief sector on numerous government advisory committees, ranging from the Department of Social Services' National Coordination Group to the Department of Home Affairs' COVID-19 Food Supply Working Group to the Trusted Information Sharing Network's Food and Grocery Sector Group.

Foodbank Australia believes the Act - in its current form - strikes the right balance between appropriately regulating the conduct of organisations engaged in election-based advocacy and ensuring that regulation does not unduly prevent community sector organisations such as ours to provide an expert, apolitical voice for vulnerable Australians.

Foodbank Australia does not believe any significant changes to the Act are required at this time.

I trust these comments are of assistance and wish the Committee well in its deliberations.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of Brianna Casey.

Brianna Casey
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER