

LIBERAL PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

Federal Director

12 November 2021

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

Dear Committee Secretary,

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters' inquiry into the qualification checklist relating to eligibility under section 44 of the Australian Constitution.

I apologise for the delay in my response.

The Liberal Party welcomes the new draft qualification checklist as published by the Committee.

The new draft checklist contains a number of improvements to the checklist that was used at the last federal election.

It is more comprehensive. It is also better structured and more user friendly.

The Liberal Party's submission to the JSCEM inquiry into the conduct of the 2019 federal election included the following:

"the current publicly available checklists do not identify the date and country of birth of a candidate. Those two details are highly relevant to the candidate's citizenship status, and hence to that candidate's constitutional eligibility. In future, those details should be included on the checklist and should be made public so that voters and parties are able to scrutinise the information."

The Liberal Party welcomes that the new draft checklist has adopted this suggestion.

The JSCEM's report into the conduct of the 2019 federal election and matters related thereto recommended that:

"...the Candidate Qualification Checklist be revised before the next election to make mandatory the provision of information about the date and country of birth for candidate, their parents and grandparents."

The Liberal Party also welcomes that this recommendation has been adopted.

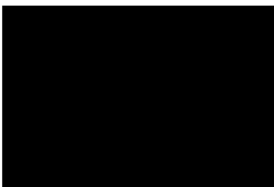
Furthermore, the questions relating to candidates' grandparents in the new checklist are more thorough and better structured.

The question that asks whether, to a candidate's knowledge, each grandparent was ever a citizen of a country other than Australia (and the details that flow from that if the answer is "yes") is a further improvement to the checklist.

If a candidate does know that an ancestor was, at some point, a citizen of a foreign country (whether by birth, descent, naturalisation or otherwise), then that becomes highly relevant to whether the candidate himself or herself is a foreign citizen.

The Liberal Party thanks the Committee for its work on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Hirst
Federal Director