

## **SUBMISSION TO THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS**

Thank you for the opportunity of making a submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters.

I have handed out how-to-vote cards for the past 20 years and on most occasions I have found that, although tense, most workers on all sides are polite and even helpful on occasions. There is the usual hustle and bustle outside the polling place as we make sure that each voter gets a how-to-vote.

Unfortunately, I now find that the Union influence is interfering with the relatively smooth running of the day by “high jacking” voters to push their own agendas.

As an example of this was my experience at the Miranda State by-election on 19<sup>th</sup> October, 2013, which was something I’d never come across before. I found myself being dwarfed by members of the NSW Fire Brigade Union who were handing out brightly coloured red and yellow flyers representing fire, with the caption to put the Liberal Party last. They were dressed in their fire uniforms and were very intimidating. It was made worse by the fact that the previous NSW Opposition Leader, John Robertson, was present and appeared to be encouraging this bullying behaviour. Photos were taken of them, but from what I heard later, they were wearing old uniforms and could not be reprimanded. This behaviour was repeated at all the polling booths throughout the electorate. There was an unheard of 27% swing against the government, which is evidence of what bullying can achieve.

This bullying behaviour was repeated again at the 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2015 election, both at pre-poll and on the day. The Unions were again harassing voters with their handouts against what they called the “sale” of the Poles and Wires. It was not only intimidating, it was a lie.

In my opinion, how-to-vote cards should be the only literature handed out at elections by identifiable workers of a registered political party. The bullying behaviour of the Unions and others at elections should be outlawed.

Coral Slattery

3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2015