



Parliament of Australia

Joint Standing Committee on  
**Electoral Matters**

**FACT SHEET**

**Report on political funding**

Issued: 9 December 2011

Chair: Mr Daryl Melham MP

**FACT SHEET:**  
**THIRD PARTIES AND ASSOCIATED ENTITIES**  
*Report on the funding of political parties and election campaigns*

Third parties and associated entities have an important role to play in the political arena. In regulating their activities, funding and disclosure arrangements for third parties and associated entities should align with the requirements for political parties and candidates, wherever possible, to avoid adding another layer of complexity to the Commonwealth funding and disclosure scheme.

Features	Current scheme	Proposed approach
<b>Third parties</b>		
Disclosure threshold	\$10 000, CPI indexed (\$11 500 for 2010-2011 financial year) Same as for political parties, associated entities and donors	Reduce to \$1 000 and remove indexation  Keep the third party disclosure threshold in line with political parties, associated entities and donors, as having a different threshold for third parties would add an unnecessary layer of complexity to the scheme <b>(Recommendation 22, page 161)</b>
Frequency of reporting	Annually	Move to six-monthly reporting, but consider a move to contemporaneous disclosure to complement any moves along those lines for political parties
Disclosure of donors to third parties	No donor disclosure obligations for donors to third parties, details of donations over the threshold are available on the third party's return	Donors to third parties should have the same obligations as donors to political parties and associated entities <b>(Recommendation 23, page 164)</b>
Caps on third party expenditure	None	Explore options for restricting third party political expenditure within a reasonable period relevant to the election date, to help ensure that public debate is not dominated by high levels of spending by these groups <b>(Recommendation 24, page 170)</b>
Bans on donations from certain donors	None	Bans on foreign donations <b>(Recommendation 10, page 85)</b> Bans on anonymous donations above \$50 <b>(Recommendation 11, page 87)</b>
<b>Associated entities</b>		
Definition	'Associated entity' is defined in the Act	Clarify definition of associated entities by defining the terms 'controlled', 'significant extent' and 'benefit', to increase administrative efficiency and maintain transparency and accountability through knowing exactly which entities are 'associated' for the purposes of the Act <b>(Recommendation 25, page )</b>

**For media comment:** Please contact the Committee Chair, Daryl Melham MP on 02 6277 2054 (Parliament House office) or 02 9774 2111 (Electoral office).

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