



The Liberal Party of Australia

FEDERAL SECRETARIAT

FEDERAL DIRECTOR
Brian Loughnane

12 September 2005

Beverley Forbes
Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Forbes:

I write to the Committee following my recent appearance before it during the hearings on the conduct of the 2004 election.

There is a matter on which I want to comment further, which was raised in a question to me by Senator Andrew Murray. He sought my view on whether, if the rolls for an election are to be closed earlier than is now the case, current enrollees seeking to vary their enrolment should be treated differently to new enrollees. My response is to say that I agree with that distinction. In fact, this point was covered by the Government in previous legislative attempts to close the roll for new enrollees on the day of the issue of writs. Provision was made for existing enrollees to change details of their enrolment for up to three working days after the issue of writs. In my view, this approach is a satisfactory way of dealing with the matter.

I take this opportunity to also refer to one other matter which the Committee may wish to examine regarding the administration of disclosure of political donations. I propose the idea of removing section 305A from the Act. That is the section which provides for donor returns. To end the requirement for donor returns would reduce the administrative burden for the AEC and for donors, while in my view it would not reduce transparency for political donations, since disclosure of donations would continue to be required from political parties and candidates.

Yours sincerely