

SUBMISSION NO. 84

Miskin, Sarah (REPS)

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| Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters |
| Submission No. 84 |
| Date Received 25-3-05 |
| Secretary |

From: Susie Russell [susierussell@tsn.cc]
 Sent: Friday, 25 March 2005 4:40 PM
 To: Committee, EM (REPS)
 Subject: Senate Voters' Choice (Preference Allocation) Bill 2004

Submission to JSCEM
 Re: Senate Voters' Choice (Preference Allocation) Bill 2004

I wish to make a brief submission in support of this Bill. Many voters like myself are angry at the political deals done with our preferences. This bill seeks to return the voter's vote to the voter.

Personally I support optional preferential as per the system in NSW. I think we should be able to not vote for candidates for which we have no trust whatsoever- not even as a last resort. However I understand that for the Bill to be consistent with House of Repts voting it needs to continue to be a compulsory system.

Indeed making above the line preferential voting compulsory would be an excellent educational tool to voters. It would be empowering. Voters are intelligent people- we are constantly being underestimated. There is much talk that so many different voting systems will result in huge informal votes but this is not the case. Voters understand that different elections have different rules. Voters can read- if we have to fill in all the boxes at the top of the page, we are capable of doing this.

By making preferences the choice of the voter- for the first time really we can make an informed decision about who represents us. Many voters follow the advice of political parties but increasingly many voters do variations where they have the choice (such as in the lower house). While it will be more work for the vote counters ie they will not be able to just count the '1' votes and then get the computer to distribute preferences, it will be much better for our democracy.

I urge the committee to support democracy over expediency and recommend favourably on Senator Brown's Bill

Yours sincerely,

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