

The Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

The following is my submission for electoral funding of political parties in this country.

No matter what level of control is placed over political parties in obtaining electoral funding, there will always be loopholes for people to donate funds without disclosure. That is human nature. In addition, while ever funds are provided to political parties by business, unions, and others, the major political parties will always be seen to be beholden to their supporters. These two issues are at the crux of our present inequitable system and do much to bring politicians and the whole political arena into disrepute.

My answer to the above is to ban donations to political parties entirely and allow full funding of electoral campaigns from the public purse. Any politician then found to have accepted a private donation should face a heavy penalty, even to the extent of losing his seat, if elected to government. This is the only way that honesty and fairness can be guaranteed for electoral funding in this country.

In order that funding can be provided to political parties from the public purse, I suggest that a levy be imposed on the corporate tax rate of say 1% and another levy of 1% be imposed on those individuals earning more than \$100,000 PA. These rates may need adjustment to ensure adequate funding. The benefit of these levies is that all business and high income earners would contribute equally and political parties would not be under any obligation to business or individuals when they form governments. Business and high income earners are already the major source of funding to political parties for electoral campaigns by way of donations and thus would not face any hardship if these levies were imposed.

The basis for electoral funding should be determined by allocating a dollar value to every primary vote recorded in an election. A minimum number of votes would of course have to be recorded before any payment was made to any political party. The political parties would be free to determine how best to spend their funds. What could be fairer? The whole process would be totally open to the public and audited by government officials.

I believe that such a system would be favourably received by the public at large and would be an example for other governments around the world to follow. The problem will of course be to convince politicians that this is a fair and equitable system for all political parties.

I hope my submission contributes in some way to an improvement in the current inequitable system for electoral funding.

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