



**Kris
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Member for Mitchell



SUBMISSION NO. 102

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31 MAR 2005
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Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
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Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters	
Submission No.	102
Date Received	31-3-05
Secretary	<i>[Signature]</i>

23rd March 2005

Dear Sir

Inquiry into the Conduct of the 2004 Federal Election and Matters Related Thereto

I am writing to the Inquiry regarding concerns about the current Senate voting system. The group ticket voting system has the ability to result in an outcome not reflective of the intentions of the voters. This was clearly demonstrated in the 2004 Federal Election in Victoria, with the Family First Senate candidate elected with first preference votes of only 0.12 of the quota, while the Greens achieved 0.569 and yet failed to secure a Senate seat.

This result potentially alienated 9% of the Victorian population, 264 thousand people, who voted for the Greens yet did not get their preferred candidate/Party elected. This outcome was a result of preference deals to gain electoral advantage and did not reflect the wishes of the voters.

Most voters do not seek out the detail in the lodged Senate group ticket for their preferred Party, to see where the Party is directing their preferences. Many assume, not unreasonably, that the Party they choose as their first preference will direct their preferences to Parties or individual candidates with the most similar policies or views. Unfortunately this is not always the case, and as the preference deals aren't widely advertised, the majority of voters voting above the line don't really know who they are voting for.

I strongly support Senator Bob Brown's *Senate Voters' Choice (Preference Allocation) Bill 2004* which addresses this problem with our current group ticket voting system. This Bill, while retaining the option to vote below the line for those who prefer this method, has the advantage of retaining the simplicity of being able to vote above the line, but introduces the ability for voters to choose where their preferences go, rather than this being dictated by secret preference deals between parties.

Yours faithfully

[Signature]
Kris Hanna MP
Member for Mitchell