



27 September, 2002  
Reference: VM:sr:C15/9  
Enquiries: Vicki Munro



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

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters	
Submission No.	169
Date Received	22/10/02
Secretary	<i>[Signature]</i>

Dear Sir,

Re: **Political Donations**

The Council on a number of occasions has expressed its concern over the disclosure requirements for political donations.

The Council's views in this regard are supported across Local Government in NSW, as evidenced by the adoption of the following motion, sponsored by Manly, at the 2001 Annual Conference of Local Government Association of NSW:

*"That the Local Government Association urge both the State and Federal Governments to amend their financial donation disclosure regulations to ensure that the true original source of any donation to a candidate or to a politician is fully disclosed throughout all tiers of government."*

It is noted that in supporting this Motion, Council put forward the following case to Conference the following:

*"Local government elected representatives are currently required to disclose all avenues of electoral funding by way of a Declaration of Political Contributions (under the Election funding Act) which shows political donations received and individual donations made that are over an amount of \$1,500.00. Further, Councils are also required to disclose sources of funding including income from trust funds through the Disclosures by Councillors and Designated Persons Return.*

*However, the course of funding such as the details of the donor and the amount donated is not required to be disclosed. Manly Council suggests that this information should be declared.*

*The disclosures by Councillors and Designated Persons Return required under the Local Government Act is completed annually and shows details of any income stream including or expected from a Trust fund. It*

*is suggested that the existence of a Trust fund should be publicly disclosed within a short period of its creation."*

Since that Motion was adopted by Conference, the Hon. Eric Abetz, Special Minister for State, has advised the Association that:

*"The Government considers that the Commonwealth's existing disclosure regime for political donations is adequate and provides a high level of transparency".*

Senator Abetz moreover goes on to state that it is proposed to increase the current threshold from \$1500 to \$3000.

The Council believes that the proposed amendment to the regulation is totally inappropriate for the reasons stated above and calls upon the Standing Committee to reconsider its position in line with Manly's proposed full disclosure regime.

Your favourable consideration of this matter is requested.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Hunter', written over a faint circular stamp or watermark.

**Jim Hunter**  
**Acting General Manager**