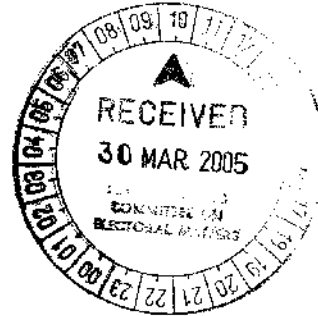


SUBMISSION NO. 65

PO Box 16
Claremont
Tasmania 7011

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Submission No. 65
Date Received 30-3-05
Secretary <i>[Signature]</i>



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25th March 2005

The Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Suite R2.105 Telelift 10.3
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Ms Forbes,

The Senate Voting System

Thanks for your letter of 10th February 2005, in response to mine of 9th November 2004. My submissions are stated below:-

It seems to me that many if not most of those people that vote 'above the line' are not conscious of the fact that parties actually **control** the distribution of 'above the line' preferences. This system is undemocratic and should be abolished.

It would be more democratic to require a voter to correctly number at least 6 squares for a half-Senate election or 12 squares for full-Senate election to record a formal vote. Additional correctly numbered preferences should also be counted.

If we must continue with the existing system, I make the following suggestions:-

- That there be prominent signs in polling booths drawing attention to the fact that 'above the line' party preference sheets can be viewed upon request.
- That a **brief** resumé be obtained from each Senate candidate. The resumé should include a principal policy statement. This information should be published in the media a week or two before Election Day.
- That candidate resumé be on display at each polling booth.

I had trouble finding **any** information about some candidates in the last Senate election.

Yours sincerely

Gerald L. Breen