

Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Department of House of Representatives
jscem@aph.gov.au

Dear Secretary

This is a submission to the current *Inquiry into the conduct of the 2010 Federal Election and matters related thereto*.

I apologise for the lateness of the submission and trust you may still consider the issue I want to raise, which relates to the provision of information on Senate candidates for voters.

As a 'below the line' voter, I steadfastly maintain my democratic right to select all candidates rather than hand over my vote for others to distribute.

I have no problems with the large number of candidates that appear on the Senate ballot paper (indeed it reflects our democracy in action) but as I must vote for each and every one of them I need to know what they stand for.

Unfortunately for quite a number of the Senate candidates, the more 'obscure', this is currently not possible as they provide no information on their political objectives. Even a web search fails to uncover information on some candidates.

In order to address this problem, I recommend that all candidates for the Senate be compelled to provide a summary (no more than one page) of their basic political vision or objectives or their primary policy prescriptions. This too is democracy in action as they as candidates must surely have some issue or political prescription they plan to pursue if they are elected.

This should be made available on the Electoral Commission website.

The only exception I would suggest is where candidates are able to direct voters to a suitably verified source of such information (almost certainly a website). This would be the case for political parties or high profile independent candidates.

Yours sincerely

Ian Thackeray