

From:

To:

Mr. Stefan Slucki,
PO Box 184
Seacliff Park S.A.
5049

Joint Standing Committee
on electoral matters
Canberra A.C.T.
2600.

17.05.2008.

Dear Secretary and members of the Committee,

I wish to address both one general concern about the rules governing where residents can cast their vote and comment on the electronic voting for the visually impaired.

1. It has been accepted practice that a resident, casting a ballot at a polling-place within their electorate, can do so at any polling-booth. I would suggest that this possible loophole be closed and that each resident be required to vote at their closest booth. In a tight election, even 50 or 100 voters casting multiple votes could perpetrate a substantial fraud.

2. As a totally blind person, I was delighted to participate in the trial of electronic voting, enabling as it did my casting of a truly independent and reliably-valid vote.

I would make the following comments:

[A] Even though I am an enthusiastic user of Braille, I see no justifiable reason for the expense involved in providing Braille ballot papers. Moreover, due to the relatively few visually-impaired people who would use Braille, there would be an unacceptable limitation of the Braille-voter's privacy which the providing of Braille ballots would involve – more than one official would probably know who the handful of Braille-ballot users were in a given electorate.

[B] I would ask that the “trial” of electronic voting be extended and provided using computers in public libraries to cut down on costs incurred in establishing a few special places which are hard for many visually-impaired people to get to.

I see the need to promote the large-font-on-screen aspect of e-voting to older Australians and others who, while not legally blind, would benefit from using the technology to cast their vote without the synthetic-speech aspect of the system.

Yours Faithfully,

Stefan Slucki.