

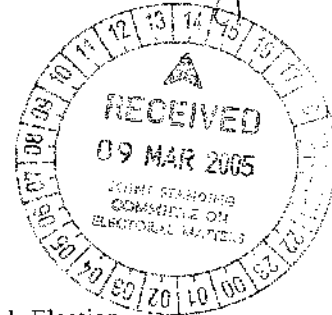
SUBMISSION NO. 36

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Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Submission No. <u>36</u>
Date Received <u>9-3-05</u>
Secretary <u>[Signature]</u>

6 March 2005

To: The Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600



Dear Sir,

Enquiry into the Conduct of the 2004 Federal Election

Voting at the Federal election on 9 October 2004 caused me some difficulty when the postal vote for which I had applied failed to arrive as expected. It did eventually arrive as is described in my Statutory Declaration, but with some disturbing implications.

I have been conscious for some years past of the anomaly that exists in our electoral arrangements, which allows voters to attend any polling booth in their electorate to vote directly, as well as being able to lodge Declaration votes (Absentee, Provisional and Prepoll votes) at polling booths in other electorates, where strangers voting there are unnoticed. In other countries such as Italy, Belgium and England, voters are directed to specific polling booths by their local authorities for the very good reason that that is the area in which they are known to and are recognisable by that community's members.

At the 1998 election an incident occurred in our local polling booth which was reported to the JSECM after the election. I can assure you that the incident involving a group of young strangers took place as described but the report was dismissed by the JSECM as not being verified by "adequate supporting evidence". The voters involved would not have been the subject of that notice had the electoral regulations required them and other voters to vote in their precinct.

While precinct voting has not been the practice in Australia, there are now forms of electronic identification and voting used in other countries which could save Australia some of the costs of elections while also increasing the security of the voting system and increasing the integrity of the roll.

It is recommended that systems in Italy, India and Belgium be investigated to see if Australia could benefit from the experience of other countries.

Yours sincerely,

Juliet A. Kirkpatrick

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