

Miskin, Sarah (REPS)

From: D & J Ashmore [ashmore@ozemail.com.au]
Sent: Monday, 28 March 2005 10:47 PM
To: Committee, EM (REPS)
Subject: Electronic Voting

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters	
Submission No.	138
Date Received	28-3-05
Secretary	

Committee Secretary, Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
 Department of House of Representatives
 Parliament House Canberra ACT, 2600.

Dear Sir,

I write on behalf of the members and clients of Canberra Blind Society (CBS) to ask you to consider, as part of the deliberations of the Standing committee, the introduction into the federal election process, of electronic voting for people who are blind or vision impaired.

In the previous two ACT elections, people who are blind or vision impaired were able to vote independently and in privacy. The ACT Electoral Commission responded to needs expressed by people who are blind or vision impaired and developed, in conjunction with a specialist team, a simple auditory method of voting using a computer number pad.

For the first time in over 100 years, people in the target group were able to exercise their rights as citizens of Australia and vote independently, with confidence and in privacy.

While the assistance of booth attendants or friends and relatives was appreciated, a young blind lawyer summed up her feelings saying, " Being able to vote by myself has given me a sense of freedom and belonging that I have never felt before".

We hope that you will seek evidence of the success of electronic voting by people who are blind or vision impaired from personnel at the ACT Electoral Commission and that recommendations will be made by members of the Standing committee, enabling plans to be made to include electronic voting in the next Federal election.

Yours sincerely,

June Ashmore AM
 President
 Canberra Blind Society
 28 March 2005

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