



Committee calls on Government to urgently review the *Election Funding, Expenditure and Disclosures Act 1981*

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In its most recent report, tabled in NSW Parliament today, the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters urges the NSW Government to finalise its review of the *Election Funding, Expenditure and Disclosures Act 1981* and calls for updated legislation to commence well before the next State Election in 2019.

The Premier had tasked the Committee with examining the recommendations made by the Panel of Experts in their *Political Donations Final Report* in December 2014. Overall, the Committee supports most of the Panel's recommendations. Mr Jai Rowell MP, Chair of the Committee, singles out the review of the *Election Funding, Expenditure and Disclosures Act 1981* as the most important task.

"It is time to finalise the review of this Act," Mr Rowell said. "It is complicated and difficult to understand. This Committee called for a review in 2013, the Panel recommended it in its 2014 report, and again this Committee supports this recommendation. An urgent and comprehensive review of the Act is critical for implementing many of the Panel's recommendations."

"The Committee also strongly supports introducing caps on political donations for local government. We are of the view that all levels of government in this State should operate under the same rules. It is simpler, it is fairer, and it reduces the risk of corruption," Mr Rowell explained.

While the Committee supports most of the Panel's recommendations, the Committee disagrees with some of their suggestions relating to public funding for political parties and candidates.

"The Panel has suggested changing the method of providing public funding to political parties for their next election campaigns. The 'dollar per vote' system was introduced for the 2015 State Election. The Panel thought minor parties would be disadvantaged by that model, but in fact, the smaller parties that gave evidence to the Committee said they prefer this system. We therefore suggest maintaining it," Mr Rowell said.

The final report and full details of the inquiry can be found on the Committee's webpage at: www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/electoral matters

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