

20 September 2016

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters  
Parliament of New South Wales  
Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000

**By email:** [electoralmatters@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:electoralmatters@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Chair,

**NSW Labor Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters -  
Inquiry into the 2015 NSW State Election**

Thank you for providing NSW Labor with the opportunity to appear before the Committee on the conduct of the 2015 NSW State Election.

**System to reduce informal voting**

Early in the hearing, the Hon Dr Peter Phelps, MLC asked a question in relation to introducing systems to reduce informal voting, specifically whether the ability to cast informally would be permitted. To clarify the position of NSW Labor, the party seeks to continue discussions about methods of reducing informality but has not yet formed a view as to whether the ability for an elector to vote informally should be removed altogether.

**Ability to scrutinise the i-vote system**

During the 2015 NSW State Election, NSW Labor asked to view the i-vote ballot prior to voting opening, however the Party has been unable to locate correspondence to the Electoral Commission with the request. NSW Labor would recommend a mechanism for Parties to appoint scrutineers prior to the start of i-voting to view the online ballot and ensure valid votes can be submitted.

**Malapportionment of NSW State Electorates**

NSW Labor places on record again its objection to the malapportionment of NSW State Electorates. Such suggestions could leave the Coalition open to further allegations of gerrymandering.

## **The introduction of an ID system for voting**

NSW Labor rejects any moves to introduce ID requirements for voting.

As the ABC's election analyst Antony Green has said, "voter ID is an answer trying to find a problem".

A substantial proportion of the electorate lack driver's licences or other forms of photo ID. Elderly voters may also lack birth certificates and be unable to prove their identity. It is NSW Labor's view that the introduction of voter identification requirements will make it difficult for people from CALD communities, Indigenous communities, students and people with disabilities to participate in our democracy. NSW Labor believes that voter ID regulations are inherently discriminatory and would oppose any move to disproportionately disenfranchise any group of voters in this way.

The necessity for voters to produce a photo ID and for polling clerks to examine and check it for every voter, will slow down the voting process and add to frustration resulting from having to queue for longer periods.

In addition, photo ID's are not a requirement at Federal Elections. Requiring them at a state election would create confusion, and be contrary to the widely accepted policy of seeking to standardise voting procedures at all levels of government to the greatest extent possible.

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on (02) [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

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Kaila Murnain  
**GENERAL SECRETARY**