



PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters

23 March 2022

MEDIA RELEASE

Caps on electoral expenditure for third-party campaigners during by-elections and when working in concert

Are the current caps for third-party campaigners' election spending during State by-elections or when working in concert with other groups still appropriate? The NSW Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters has adopted a new inquiry to look into these issues.

The Committee will look at how these caps have operated since their introduction and the impact they have had. In particular, the Committee wants to hear how these caps have operated in recent by-elections, and whether there have been any significant changes since their introduction.

"The Government introduced these caps to allow third-party campaigners to influence voting at an election, but also to ensure that spending was kept at a reasonable level when compared to that of the parties and candidates directly contesting elections," explained Mr Lee Evans MP, Committee Chair.

"Similarly, caps on third-party campaigners' expenditure if they are working in concert were introduced to prevent circumventing of these spending caps."

The caps are outlined in the *Electoral Funding Act 2018*.

"The caps aim to create a balance between allowing third-party campaigners to genuinely engage with electors on issues based campaigning, and limiting an escalation in election spending, to minimise the influence of money on election outcomes.

"The Committee will consider whether this balance is still adequate, or whether the caps need to be amended or removed, particularly in light of developments since the caps were introduced, such as the High Court decision on third-party campaign spending in January 2019."

The Committee is currently calling for submissions.

The closing date for submissions is Friday, 22 April.

Further information about the inquiry can be found on the Committee's website.

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