



Media Release

Inquiry into Public Funding of Local Government Election Campaigns

The Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters is conducting a public inquiry into whether candidates contesting Council elections should be reimbursed for some of their election costs.

Chair of the NSW Parliament's Committee on Electoral Matters, Robert Furolo MP is inviting interested residents, community organisations, Councillors and Registered Political Parties to make a submission to the inquiry into public funding of local government elections.

Earlier this year, the Committee conducted a similar inquiry into donations and Public Funding for State Elections and made a number of recommendations to the Government to improve the integrity of the political process.

Evidence was presented to the earlier inquiry that public funding was an important tool to minimise the need for large corporate donations to political parties and candidates.

"For some people, the perception of influence by those who donate to political parties and candidates can undermine the integrity of decision making by elected representatives." Mr Furolo said.

"This perception exists in Local Government as well as State and Federal Governments.

"The inquiry is seeking the views of interested citizens and stakeholders as to whether public funding of candidates at Council elections is supported. It will also examine who should be eligible, how much should be provided, and who should fund the scheme."

Mr Furolo said that it was very important that the community has confidence in the system of elections and decision-making by elected representatives.

"Public funding of elections could be a transparent way of reducing the need for political donations and by extension, improving the sense of integrity in the political process.

"This inquiry is a chance for the community and interested groups to have their say on whether they support reform of election donations and funding of campaigns.

"I encourage people to make a submission if they wish for their views to be considered on this issue."

The closing date for submissions is **20 September 2010** and submissions can be emailed to electoralmatters@parliament.nsw.gov.au, lodged via the Committee's website at www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/electoralmatters or mailed to: The Chair, Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters, Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

For more information or to arrange an interview please contact Robert Furolo MP on 9584 1788.