

**Submission
No 4**

**INQUIRY INTO ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2007 NSW
ELECTION AND RELATED MATTERS**

Organisation:

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David Borger MP

MEMBER FOR GRANVILLE

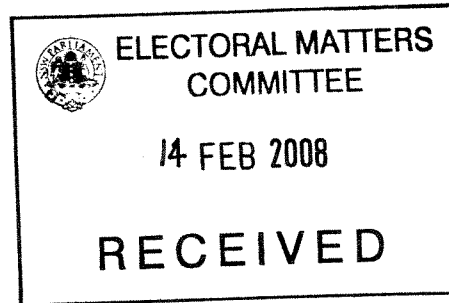
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11 February 2008

The Chair
Joint Standing Committee on
Electoral Matters
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000



Our ref: DB:gm

Dear Chair

Enquiry into the administration of the 2007 NSW election and related matters

Please find following a summary of my concerns about various events that occurred during the 2007 NSW Election in the Electorate of Granville. I have refrained from making reference to individuals or political parties.

- Over-crowding - additional polling booths need to be made available for future elections. I observed people waiting for over an hour at some polling booths, and I believe some people ultimately did not cast a vote because of the inconvenience and time required. This is especially of concern for people who are working and have limited time available.
- Because of long queues, candidates and workers in a competitive situation 'work the line', i.e. to walk up and down the queue of voters, coercing them at length to vote a certain way. This sometimes led to the harassment of voters who were a captive audience and could not walk away. I personally witnessed some campaign supporters removing their opposing party 'how to votes' from voters hands. I also noted harassment and bullying by these booth workers. In addition, I have been advised that supporters who could not speak English were told by party campaigners that their opposing party 'how to vote' was in fact their own 'how to vote'. This could be avoided in a number of ways, for example reducing queues, or by prohibiting campaigning inside the fence of polling places.
- In the lead up to election day outside a pre-poll booth, supporters of a particular candidate's booth workers were 'swarming' potential voters with up to 10 campaign workers surrounding an individual voter and walking them to the 5m line. This had the effect of depriving voters of receiving 'how to vote' material from other candidates and their supporters. Opposing campaign workers were threatened, sworn at and spat at. Despite complaints to local electorate officials, no security was made available at pre-poll. Some supporters feared for their own safety and refused to attend pre-poll.
- There should be a limit on the number of campaign workers that are allowed on pre-poll. I also believe that security guards are necessary in future elections in the Granville area to prevent the intimidation and harassment of voters that occurred on election day. I am proud of the resilience of our local democracy but this is being increasingly threatened by thuggish tactics of opposing supporters in the local area.

Yours sincerely



David Borger MP
State Member for Granville