

INQUIRY INTO PUBLIC FUNDING OF ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

Organisation: Australian Business Party

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Dear Committee,

Greetings!

I would like to offer you some suggestions on the topic of electoral funding for State Elections. For some time now it has been the habit for Political Parties and Independent Candidates to raise funds via an array of mechanisms ie raffles, fund raising dinners and the collection of donations from the public and the business community.

As a responsible community, we all should as citizens expect some of our taxes to fund political campaigns as it serves to gain political representation for the populace at large. We live largely in an apathetic society. A society that has lost faith in the electoral process primarily due to the financial aspect of political campaigns. People view politics with some disdain as they feel that the buck stops with those who have the means to fund their campaign.

The question now becomes 'What will the State Government do to rectify this impediment'? I believe that the best method of publicly funding political campaigns would be to introduce a fair and equitable system that does not give advantage or favour to the major parties; but one that puts all political parties or candidates on an equal footing.

I would like to make the following suggestions:

a) During the election period a booklet should be sent to every voter containing the names of the political parties and their platform or agendas for the election. This would allow voters the time to investigate and even research further the policies or platform of a political party. This method would provide all political parties an equal chance of getting their message out to all NSW voters. It is fair. It is equitable.

b) Television Campaigns: All political parties should be given an equal portion of free television air time to promote their parties. The State Government may even wish to run a special feature program the night before the election allowing all political parties the chance to promote themselves and to have a say on the issues that are important to them.

c) Radio Campaigns: All political parties should be given some free to air radio time to place advertisements.

I think that by implementing (a), (b) and (c) we can achieve a true and transparent way of communicating with the public. We may even reduce the amount of paper that is used by political parties advertising for the election campaign.

It is time the NSW Government took action.

All members of Parliament need to support a fairer system that does not favour major political parties but rather political ideology. It does not matter how many members or subscribers a political party has. It is the message and platform that matters.