

**Submission
No 2**

PREFERENCE COUNTING IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS IN NSW

Name: Mr Roderick Chalmers

Date Received: 27 September 2017

PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS

Inquiry into preference counting in local government elections in NSW

Honourable Members, I would like to make submissions to your enquiry into preference counting in local government elections in NSW.

I submit that under legislation all persons on the Electoral Roll are required to vote. It seems a strange process that the Electoral Commission can then decide NOT to count all the preferences but rather rely on a computer program to decide the outcome of the election process. If the members of the public are required to vote then the Electoral Commission MUST be required to count all those votes and distribute the preferences as the voters wished.

I submit that the whole voting and counting process for Local Government Elections is far too complex, time consuming and convoluted, as has been indicated by the increased number of informal votes. The preferential system of voting is outdated and no longer fit for purpose.

I further submit that the voting system for Local Government Elections should be changed. I suggest that there be NO above the line voting, all candidates are listed on the ballot paper in order that they were drawn from the ballot at the close of nominations. Their name and party allegiance, if any, would be on the ballot paper. Voters would then only select one candidate on the ballot paper, the candidate with the most votes, at the close of the poll, would be elected first followed in turn by the candidate with the next greatest number, this process would continue until all the vacant positions are filled. Under this system the elected representatives should be known within 3 or 4 hours of the closing of the polls.

I respectfully request that these submissions be put before the Committee and be given due consideration by the Honourable Members.

Yours Sincerely

Roderick Chalmers. ex Councillor of the Cootamundra Shire Council

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