PREFERENCE COUNTING IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS IN NSW

Organisation: Christian Democratic Party (Fred Nile Group)

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CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY

SUBMISSION

FOR

NSW PARLIAMENT'S ELECTORAL MATTERS COMMITTEE

PREFERENCE COUNTING in LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Australian and NSW Electoral Acts enshrine the principle and democratic right of each person to vote and within that is implicit that each vote matters and each vote should be counted: to diverge from this breaches democratic principles.

The Christian Democratic Party (CDP) believes that the current random process applied to the counting of preferences is done for administrative expediency and as the current practice does not count every vote it is a breach of democracy and should be replaced with a fairer method.

SUBMISSION

1. Preference Counting at Local Government Elections

The current random process of counting preferences is just that: RANDOM and by its very nature could easily advantage one candidate over another in contradiction of how the actual preferences have been completed by voters. Each voter has the right for their vote to be counted.

Recommendation 1

Replace the current Random Preference Counting process with a fairer method.

Recommendation 2

Suggested Counting arrangement:

1. Count Above and Below-the-Line votes as present to get initial totals

2. Determine Quotas per Group and Individual vote totals

3. If a full Quota is thereby achieved for any candidate(s) by adding the relevant Group and Individual Quota, declare that candidate(s) elected

4. If the required number of Councillors to be elected is not achieved then,

5. Allocate Preferences for all Below-the-Line votes

6. If the required number of Councillors to be elected is still not achieved then,

7. Allocate Preferences for all Above-the-Line votes on the following basis:

    a. For the Group with the smallest remaining Quota, after any Councillors have been declared elected, then apportion all Above-the-Line completed Preferences for that Group to the first Candidate who has not yet been declared elected in each other Group for which preferences have been designated as follows:

A * B / C

Where A = Total Above-the-Line Other Group Preferences
        B = Total Above-the-Line Quota Remaining for Group being allocated
        C = Total Original Above-the-Line Quota for Group being allocated

8. Repeat this process until the required number of Councillors to be elected each achieve a full quota or no further Above-the-Line Preferences remain to be allocated and declare elected the candidate(s) with the highest part Quota to fill the required number of Councillors.