

# Media Release

NSW Legislative Council

Public Accountability and Works Committee



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## UPPER HOUSE COMMITTEE HANDS DOWN REPORT INTO LABOR GRANT PROGRAM

An Upper House committee has today handed down its report into the Local Small Commitments Allocation program. The program, which was announced by NSW Labor shortly before the 2023 state election, allocated \$400,000 to Labor Party candidates in every electorate in New South Wales to spend as promises for small community grants as they were campaigning for election.

Chair of the Public Accountability and Works Committee, Ms Abigail Boyd MLC, said: "Given the troubled history of grant programs in this state, and given the clearly electoral nature of this program, suspicions were raised and ultimately confirmed as the committee forensically examined the design and administration of this program. What we found was that the Local Small Commitments Allocation program was an ill-conceived ploy concocted by the NSW Labor Party while in opposition, during an election campaign, in an attempt to deliver an electoral advantage to their candidates around the state. It was an improper and inappropriate use of public money."

The Chair continued: "First off, it became abundantly clear to us that this was not a well-planned, clearly thought out scheme. Instead, the evidence proved that it was a rushed, desperate attempt to woo voters in the final weeks before an election. It was, for all intents and purposes, a publicly-funded Labor Party election slush fund."

The Chair added: "The administration of these ad-hoc political promises by Labor Party candidates after the Labor Party formed government, was inconsistent and further politicised. For example, we found evidence that the Premier's Office directed grant allocations in several electorates to be changed after the election. We never got a satisfactory answer for why this occurred, despite the committee's best efforts, leaving us to speculate at political motives. Our investigations into these matters were consistently impeded and frustrated by a recalcitrant Premier's Office and members of the Executive."

The Chair concluded: "This inquiry highlights the failures of yet another politicised grant program in New South Wales. The people of this state deserve better. We hope the lessons from this program are kept in mind as we approach the 2027 election."

The inquiry received 12 submissions and held six hearings at Parliament House. Details concerning the inquiry, and a copy of the final report, can be found on the inquiry [webpage](#).

**For more information, please contact:**

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