

**Submission
No 151**

INQUIRY INTO ELECTORAL AND POLITICAL PARTY FUNDING

Organisation: Non-Smokers' Movement of Australia Inc
Name: Ms Margaret Hogge
Position: President
Telephone:
Date received: 22/02/2008

To: Select Committee on Electoral and Political Party Funding

From: The Non-Smokers' Movement of Australia Inc.

In light of the decision (apparently heavily influenced by gambling interests) by the Labor Government of NSW to declare substantially enclosed areas of pubs and clubs as outdoors (with no regard of the health effects of deadly secondhand tobacco smoke on workers and patrons), we call on all political funding to be made substantially more restricted and transparent.

Not long ago the then President of Australian Hotels Association (AHA) Mr. John Thorpe **AO** declared that "Democracy isn't cheap" when questioned about his and his association's influence with the Labor Party to keep smoking from being banned in NSW pubs. This, despite the Smokefree Environment Act having been originally promulgated to reduce the well-known and deadly effects of secondhand smoke and to promote health and reduce smoking rates in the community. AHA has been a major donor to NSW Labor Party, providing party funding and venues for functions.

The following reforms, similarly promoted by ASH(Action on Smoking and Health) Australia, are recommended:

1. Increased transparency and recording of sources of funding, with fully audited and timely funding reports. Results to be published within the month prior to the election.
2. \$1000 limit per donor per year.
3. Limit on political donations from organizations, including corporations and trade unions. No donations from foreign entities.
4. Caps on total electoral spending by parties and by independents.
5. Independent monitoring on all advertising by governments to ensure funds not spent to enhance government profile.
6. Substantially increased penalties for breaching political funding laws.
7. Political donations no longer tax deductible.
8. National forum to be called to reform all levels of political funding at all three tiers of government, to ensure that government decisions are not skewed in favour of high-funding donors.

Overall, political candidates and parties must be ready to declare their funding sources at any reasonable time prior to elections – the information should be available to the public on open websites.

Signed: Margaret Hogge,
President, the Non-Smokers' Movement of Australia Inc.
PO Box K860 Haymarket NSW 1240
Ph/Fax : 02 9905 8787
Email: nsma@nsma.org.au Web: nsma.org.au