

**Submission
No 73**

INQUIRY INTO ELECTORAL AND POLITICAL PARTY FUNDING

Organisation:

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Reform is urgently needed as millions of dollars are being donated to influence government policy decisions in favour of the donor and at the expense of the community.

1. Measures to increase transparency in the source of donations, including:
 - (a) prompt and transparent reports at least quarterly and in the month before an election, to a public website maintained by the Election Funding Authority;
 - (b) requirements for party committees or other fundraising bodies to state the sources of their donations; and
 - (c) all funding disclosures should be accompanied by a report from an accredited auditor.
2. There should be caps limiting donations, such as \$1,000 per year per individual donor.
3. There should be a ban or at the very least limits on political donations from organisations, including corporations, trade unions, and a total ban on foreign or transnational entities.
4. There should be caps on total electoral spending by all parties and candidates.
5. There should be tighter controls over "independent" campaign spending by the supporters of political parties and candidates.
6. An independent committee should be established to monitor government advertising campaigns to ensure that public funds are spent for the purposes of public education, not political gain.
7. In local government, public funding should be introduced, private funding capped and transparent disclosure required prior to elections.
8. There should be increased penalties for breaching political funding laws.
9. Adequate funding should be provided to the EFA to enforce these laws.
10. NSW parliament should propose to the Federal Government that a National Summit be urgently convened to develop a national strategy to fundamentally reform - at federal, state/territory and local government levels - legislation in this area; measures 1-9 above should form the basis of the NSW position at the national level. This Summit should include not just politicians but a wide range of legal experts, academics and community representatives; it should be allowed sufficient time for proper consideration and comprehensive debate of all reform options.