

**Submission  
No 8**

## **INQUIRY INTO ELECTORAL AND POLITICAL PARTY FUNDING**

**Organisation:**

**Name:** Mrs Margo Irons

**Telephone:**

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Thank you for this inquiry into funding politicians through donations. This is long overdue and your government is to be congratulated for instigating this inquiry.

It is my view that politicians all need to be heard, regardless of the donations made by their supporters. These supporters usually expect something in return for their donations to either a political party or individual politician. In a more democratically governed society politicians are voted in and paid by voters who let them know their views without having to pay to have these views implemented. This current way of running a democracy, of course, excludes a large number of voters who are unable to afford to pay politicians as they can only afford to pay their legitimate taxes. Therefore the rich are able to have a greater say in governing our country, addition to their actual public vote. A democracy without donations from rich and powerful people and companies will lead to voters all having a more equal say in governing our country. This will emblazon the Australian ethic of giving us all a fair go.

Advertising and public relations that are donor funded gives an unequal advantage to some politicians and their political parties, and the best politician or party does not necessarily win the votes. Voters can be persuaded by these advertising campaigns at the neglect of those who they think may be the best person or government to govern. At present we can see what has happened to our deteriorating health system where the government focus has been on servicing wealthy citizens who can gain medical care. Unfortunately this is often at the loss by many poorer people who cannot obtain medical services. An example of this can be seen in areas such as dental and hospital services. Additionally, child protection and road services are a major concern for many voters.

If advertising by politicians and political parties can only focus on actual facts about past performances or promises, voters would have a clearer understanding of what might be expected from a politician or political party. Also, if donations are banned then all politicians and political parties will have a more equal standing in any election.

Yours sincerely,

Margo Irons.