

**Submission  
No 6**

**INQUIRY INTO PROVISIONS OF THE ELECTION  
FUNDING, EXPENDITURE AND DISCLOSURES BILL  
2011**

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Submission to: Select Committee on the provisions of the Election Funding, Expenditure and Disclosures Amendment Bill 2011

The purpose of this bill should be to level the playing field between the power of corporations and the rights to free speech of the ordinary citizens of this State. The ability of corporations to buy favourable decisions through political donations must be curbed, while allowing citizens to collectively make their voice heard on matters of concern.

The three main concerns with the bill have been identified by the Chairman of the Committee, John Kaye:

- The ban on political spending by peak organisations is an unnecessary restraint on the rights of free speech, eg. by the Nature Conservation Council on environmental issues.

- The aggregation of the spending of affiliated organisations (e.g. unions affiliated to the Labor party) into the spending of the party for the purposes of the caps on electoral communication expenditure would undermine the right of unions to conduct campaigns on issues of concern to their members.

- The ban on affiliation fees would undermine the right of the Labor party to support collective membership.

The Greens have already detailed three amendments they propose to put forward. I support these amendments and consider that they are absolutely necessary to make this a fair and equitable bill.