



9 January 2020

Moderator  
Rev David Baker

Committee Secretary  
Economics and Governance Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane Qld 4000

By Email: [egc@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:egc@parliament.qld.gov.au)

**SUBMISSION: Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Bill 2019 (Qld)**

I raise profound concerns on this bill, and the process the Government has used to enact it.

Firstly, the limited time for public consultation, and it being over the Christmas break, has severely constrained our capacity to make a more fulsome response.

Secondly, the bill is a serious constrain on freedom of speech, which is a cornerstone of our society; a freedom from which other freedoms flow. To seek to constrain the funding of public discourse as the bill proposes is deeply problematic and an unreasonable constraint to the freedoms we enjoy, and as such, should not be advanced. Poor quality arguments should be countered by quality responses, not the restriction of funding by those who retain the right of access to sources of funding that others are not able to access.

Thirdly, the bill privileges four groups – for profit companies, unions, governments, and political parties with representation – over other groups, and severely disadvantages charities and civil society groups. It put onerous obligations on the organisations of civil society and places them under a sword of damocles in the ambiguity and over-reaching ambit of its obligations. Public companies have other obligations that restrict what they can spend, but unions are free to spend vast amounts of money on political issues in a way that other “third parties” are not similarly free. This bill effectively privileges the union movement, government, and existing political parties with representation over every other group in society. It is profoundly partisan and unfair. This bill effectively advances one side of politics at the expense of the other and at the expense of the rights of citizens to engage in public discourse.

I urge its withdrawal so that proper consultation can take place.

Yours faithfully,

**Rev David Baker**  
Moderator