

From: [John Dowling](#)
To: [Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee](#)
Subject: Electoral and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015
Date: Thursday, 9 April 2015 7:37:07 PM

I refer to the proposed Electoral and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015-04-09 and the objectives of the bill as stated in the Queensland Parliament webpage and reproduced below:

Objective of the Bill

The key objectives of the Bill are to give effect to the Government's election commitments to amend the *Electoral Act 1992* (Electoral Act) to:

- reinstate the \$1,000 gift threshold amount, backdated to 21 November 2013;
- remove voter proof of identity requirements; and
- facilitate real time disclosure of political donations.

Other objectives of the Bill are to:

- remove voter proof of identity requirements for local government elections;
- clarify when a fundraising contribution is a gift; and
- give effect to the Government's election commitment that the chair (CCC chair) of the Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) have access to a judicial pension.

In these matters I make the following submissions:

- 1) *'reinstate the \$1,000 gift threshold amount, backdated to 21 November 2013'.*

I OBJECT. The \$1,000 threshold is not a significant amount within today's economy.

The threshold should be not less than three times that amount ; that is, \$1,000 per year for each year in the current electoral cycle. The amount of \$3,000 could not

possibly influence any member of parliament or political party. The right and privilege of any individual voter to make such a donation and their privacy should be protected.

Further, backdating legislation and/or amendments is an onerous and indeed a dangerous practice and must be avoided by any parliamentary democracy unless absolutely

necessary to safeguard the security of that democracy. In this case, to backdate the legislation and/or amendment has no credibility or merit and is highly questionable.

- 2) *'remove voter proof of identity requirements.*

I OBJECT. The value of every vote in our democratic electoral process needs to be paramount and must be protected. The removal of the need to produce identification

only exposes our democratic electoral process to fraud and exploitation, particularly in today's world with all its advanced communications. In recent times we have seen

how electoral systems can be manipulated by well-organised and malevolent groups. Every possible action must be taken to preserve the integrity and value of our

democratic electoral system. Maintaining proof of identity is a minimum requirement in that process. No honest voter would have any objection to protecting the value of each vote.

3) *'facilitate real time disclosure of political donations'*

I OBJECT. All political donors, prior to an election, need to be protected by a degree of confidentiality.

Recent elections have seen quite vehement and heated rhetoric directed against various candidates and their supporters (it is a matter of public record) and this needs to stop.

Exposing donors to such rhetoric during election campaigns can only subject them to undue pressure to not make a donation which, in any democratic society, is or at least

should be, their absolute right. They should be able to donate to whomsoever they choose without fear or favour. It is a tenet that must be preserved. There is, rightly, every

opportunity after an election, in a calm and stable post-election environment, to publish a list of donors and this adequately serves the need for checks and balances.

4) *'remove voter proof of identity requirements for local government elections'*

I OBJECT. On the same grounds as expressed in item 2).

5) *clarify when a fundraising contribution is a gift.*

This objective needs much more clarification in itself. There is no clear explanation of the genesis of the amendment nor its purpose. Asking voters to comment on this amendment is

like asking them to comment on the dark side of the moon. The amendment needs a far more detailed explanation before becoming a proposed amendment.

Regards

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