



Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (Qld) Ltd

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10 April 2015

Dear Colleague,

Re: Electoral and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015

We appreciate the opportunity to make a submission in relation to the *Electoral and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015* ("the Bill").

We commend to the Committee the amendments proposed in relation to the voter ID laws – indeed, such are consistent with previous submissions made by our Organisation. We are of the view that the proposed amendments will remove an unnecessary obstacle which presently discourages some from participating in the electoral process. Such is especially the case with many of our clients – whom often lack the necessary identification and are susceptible to feeling "shamed" in regard to the current 'declaration vote' protocols.

We also commend to the Committee the proposed amendments regarding the electoral gift disclosure regime – which are designed to increase accountability, transparency, and integrity in the political process. The only query we raise is whether the amendments go far enough. One school of thought is that transparency dictates that any gift, irrespective of the amount or value, or indeed the timing of such – should be reportable. A gift not only has

the potential to influence decisions, but just as importantly, carries with it the 'perception' of influence (irrespective of whether or not such had any impact at all).

We thank the Committee for this opportunity to provide feedback, and wish it every success with its deliberations.

Yours sincerely,



Shane Duffy
Chief Executive Officer