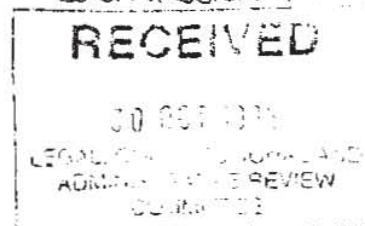


Submission No 27



Spec 18-1

30 October 1998

The Research Director  
Legal Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane 4000

Dear Director,

At the state and federal elections I was a booth worker and a scrutineer. On both occasions I was surprised and delighted at the level of hostility offered by voters at the waste of paper, time and resources by the system we have of how-to-vote cards. I would like to submit to you some of the problems with the current system of candidate how-to-vote cards that I have experienced.

1. I have found that there is a lack of consistency over recycling – some polling officers permit recycling by booth workers and some do not.
2. Many more people are refusing to take how-to-vote cards on the grounds of waste paper however this presents the possibility of voters incorrectly filling out the ballot paper resulting in an informal vote.
3. Another problem is “bogus” how-to-vote cards. Large parties or organisations with ample funds frequently print and distribute cards designed to mislead voters into thinking they are receiving the how-to-vote card of a rival party.
4. It seems to me that the present system disadvantages smaller parties (more public-spirited but with less people and less money) and in the process interferes with the free flow of democracy.

A poster on the wall of the polling booth with all the parties' positions represented would have everybody level-pegging.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marie Johnston".

Marie Johnston