

# Written Submission on the Interim Report, Electoral Act Review

I write to support the need for drastic reform to the conditions for reporting on political donations to political parties.

Given the fact that political donations have the potential to skew policy development, or at the very least give rise to the perception that they do, it is clearly in the public interest that the electorate have access to information about who is donating what to political parties, in time for that knowledge to inform their voting decisions. Therefore, I urge the final report to recommend:

1. That all donations over a certain amount must be accounted for publically by the party receiving them. The amount, in my view, should be small. I would recommend \$100. If this is thought to be too small, then the minimum donation to be reported should most certainly not exceed \$1000.
2. If any individual or organization should make more than one donation in any electoral period - i.e. between one election and the next - then those donations should be aggregated for reporting purposes.
3. It should be illegal for donations from the money belonging to any one individual or organization to be channelled through another individual or organization.
4. The reporting of donations should be in real time, or as close to it as is technically feasible. In any case, the delay between receipt and reporting should not exceed one week, and nor should reporting of moneys donated before an election occur after the election date.
5. Similar reporting requirements should apply to any advertising (including in kind advertising) taken out by individuals or organizations which, in the opinion of the Electoral Commission, is intended to sway voters either towards or away from voting for a particular party or parties. In the former case, the cost of the advertising should be allocated to that party's report (or proportionately to the several parties, if more than one). In the latter case, the cost should be allocated proportionately to all the parties standing that are not targeted by the advertisement.

In the public interest, Tasmania ought to implement the most stringent reporting requirements of any jurisdiction in Australia.

Submitted by:  
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