

## **Review of the Tasmanian Electoral Act, 2004**

Please accept my submission into the Review of the *Tasmanian Electoral Act, 2004*.

I think that the last Tasmanian State Election in 2018 proved that the current Electoral Act is not functioning in a way to best protect the democratic process and express the will of the Tasmanian electorate when it comes to political donations. The lack of transparent, clearly-defined statutes governing political donations in this State clearly works only in favour of a political party (usually the party in power at the time of elections).

Both major parties currently “benefit” from this legitimised form of obfuscation. This is an undemocratic state of affairs, which needs urgent rectification to ensure public faith in the political system. Figures show that only 16.4% of the over \$21 million donated to all political parties between 2009 and 2015 have been disclosed.

Tasmania does not even have its own Electoral laws dealing with political donations, but simply utilises Section 302 (C) of the Commonwealth Government’s Act. All donations above \$1,000 should be publicly disclosed. Further, the disclosures should be made at the time of elections and not, as at present, once a year when the appropriate disclosures could not be considered in the light of any political campaign.

Third party donations to electoral spending by the major parties should be strictly limited to \$1,500.00 and publicly disclosed.

The Guidelines indicate that the Review will be guided by two governing principles; “protecting freedom of speech, with note to Constitutional implications, and minimal cost to the taxpayer”. The former principle is a sound one, the latter is nonsense. The changes to the Electoral Act, relating to political donations, will incur minimal cost.

Yours faithfully,

**David Halse Rogers.**

7<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

