

Attn: Secretary,

*Please find below my submission to the committee.*

Submission 102  
Date Received: 5 March 2014

*Regards, Matthew Robson.*



Voters at this recent election have become acutely aware that a vote above the line subscribes them to their vote being subjected to a twister arrangement between minor parties and fringe groups. This has been known for some time, but I believe the results from the senate at the recent election bells the cat, and it's time to reform the way we select those who sit in our house of review.

*I would like to propose two small changes to the way we count and elect senators*

*The first is optional preferential voting*

Just as the NSW upper house dealt with this issue in 1999, we are facing the same issue at a Federal level. Placing this back in the hands of the voter will deliver a better result that reflects the electorate's full opinion. As someone who was employed by the AEC at the last election, the number of conversations I had with voters about this issue was enormous, as well as those who had made errors on their ballot papers, numbering 1-110 (The NSW Senate Ticket). I believe that under a new system, where voters number one to six above or below the line, we would see a better reflection of the electorate's opinion.

*My second proposal is an exclusion of candidates from receiving preferences and gaining seats with a primary vote of less than five percent*

Minor parties are needed in our democracy; it is a vital part of a flourishing democracy. But I am strongly of the opinion that those who cannot achieve above five percent of the primary vote in a state or territory, need to meet and engage electorate further and garner public support.

It's important to note that no one has broken the rules or deceived any one, nor are people like Glenn Durery rorting the system, by bringing parties together for preference deals- the system is delivering the correct result every time as per its own rules; Thus the system needs amending.

There are members in our community that would like to see a smaller ballot paper, and suggest ways in which we could achieve this, such as tighter regulation of political parties and an increase in the deposit laws.

Such proposals would and could work, but they must be a separate conversation to the two proposals above – Excluding minor parties from a Senate count because of the number of primary votes they have and 'encouraging' single issue or protest groups to not stand for elections are two different issues.

*Using the two changes that I outlined above, I think we can see an effect that many in the community are requesting, given the result*

Many thanks for taking the time to read this. I am more than happy to work with you and to hear how the parliament is dealing with this issue. I have found the attached piece written by Antony Green helpful in forming my thinking. I hope it assists you as well.

Warm Regards,

Matthew Robson.