

To whom it may concern,

I was a candidate in the 2013 Federal Election. My experience in the election process has opened my eyes to so many failings of the current system.

I witnessed a number of things which left a lot to be desired as far as achieving a fair election. An example is the financial ability of one candidate to mail every registered voter an AEC postal vote form along with instructions on how to complete it with their preferences. The whole mailed package looked very official and I'm sure was intended to deceive voters into believing the envelope was sent by the AEC. This essentially is buying votes through deception.

Then there is the recount situation. The seat I voted in was recounted due to a close vote. The recount arrived at a different number than the original count. I wonder which was right? Yes I understand the process involves reconsidering the validity of a vote, and so the vote which may not have counted the first time is counted the second time or vice versa. This alone is a major flaw in the current system, which would be eliminated with a computerised system.

Do I need to mention the "missing" votes in Fairfax which later turned up, or the facial situation in the WA Senate?

The other item I specifically want to raise is the current Senate preferences system. I find it unacceptable that preferences flows are not shown and cannot be determined easily by voters at the polling booth. I have no issue with having many parties compete for votes, and anything which discourages that should be frowned upon (such as the changed in the SA state system) however I believe having preferences flow with full value down though 30 or more steps is not consistent with a fair election process. I propose that at each movement of a vote down a preference chain that the value of the vote is halved. IE, 1st preference is 1 vote, 2nd preference is 1/2 vote, 3rd preference is 1/4 vote, 4th preference is 1/8th vote etc. The reduction in value of the vote as it moves down the preference chain eliminates the situation where a party or candidate is elected by a preference flow that was never the intention of the voter.

I will also via cut and paste include the issues and solutions Mr Clive Palmer MP has raised as I believe these are important also.

Regards
Bryce Letcher