

## Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters -

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## Inquiry into the 2025 Election

Submitted by: [REDACTED], Jewish constituent of Goldstein  
9 October 2025

I wish to say at the start that I have asked for my name to be withheld (*but submission published*) *not* because I am afraid to be challenged on my claims and views. I have done it because the aggression against [REDACTED] and her volunteers during this election campaign was absolutely terrifying such that people have feared retribution and for their safety.

[REDACTED]

## Ban all proxy groups from polling sites

I have been involved in politics in New York City and Australia for nearly 50 years - political campaigns at the federal, state and local levels, as well as community and political organising and in advocacy groups. And you know, you win some, you lose some. I've been through it all.

**Never have I experienced the bullying, lies, intimidation and trauma I experienced throughout the 2025 Goldstein campaign.** I have never been afraid to show up at pre-poll, never thought twice about sporting a t-shirt or showing a bumper sticker. But this time, every day when I left my home, I looked to see if my poster of the [REDACTED] candidate had been vandalised as so many had, with feces, swastikas and more.

Although I am loathe to raise this issue during the current atmosphere of antisemitism, never have I, as a Jew and Zionist, experienced such

antisemitism as I did from fellow Jews during this campaign. I am no shrinking violet but I had to dig deep inside for the wherewithal to show up to the lightening rod polling booth in Brighton every single day for two weeks. And of course, I was but one of the hundreds of [REDACTED] volunteers doing pre-poll work.

There were at minimum four third-party organisations -- Repeal the Teal (RTT), Better Australia, the Teals Revealed and Advance -- advocating voting choices to "Put [REDACTED] last" and spreading disinformation about her views and record.

It is entirely legitimate to advocate putting a candidate last. Their aggressive presence, however, corrupted democracy at the polls through ruthless and baseless lies, intimidation of volunteers and intrusive behaviour with voters.

Volunteers from proxy organisations and the [REDACTED] Party bullied and took their aggressive views out on me and other volunteers in [REDACTED]'s campaign -- calling us antisemitic and in the case of Jews, self-hating Jews. [REDACTED] was called a terrorist and a supporter of Hamas, among other things. These volunteers also walked up and down the voter queues, standing intrusively close to the voters. I heard some whispering to voters that [REDACTED] is antisemitic and to put her last. In one example, by my husband's own eye witness report, one of their volunteers pulled out her *magen David* (star of David) necklace prominently and stuck it in the faces of voters asking them if they were Jews and if so to put [REDACTED] last. They obviously have no idea of the problems that can emerge from pressuring Jews to reveal themselves.

As I said, advocating to put a candidate last is fair game. Calling her antisemitic is quite another, and taking those views out on volunteers is still another.

During the Brighton synagogue candidates' forum, a Better Australia truck was parked across the street displaying a distorted and deceptive sign against [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED]'s supporters interrupted and booed [REDACTED] and neither the moderator, who had promised to maintain *machlochet l'shem shamaim* - argument for the sake of learning -- nor the [REDACTED]

candidate made any effort to restore order and balance, feeding into the atmosphere of fervour and hatred.

These third-parties lied in alleging that they were *campaigning on issues rather than for specific candidates* which would have made them subject to different finance rules. I saw one exchange t-shirts with a [REDACTED] party candidate and another arrange to do so later. RTT volunteers hung out in the [REDACTED] Party tent and stored their supplies there.

It was insulting and intimidating and required immense courage from our volunteers to continue to show up. We had to organise “sunshine squads” in which I participated to intervene in bullying and to keep up our team’s spirits. We had to withdraw one of our volunteers due to the trauma he experienced.

As I’ve mentioned, I have lived and done politics of all kinds in the US and Australia most of my 65 years. Australia needs to take a good hard look at itself and decide if we want to go down the path of bigotry, hatred and antagonistic elections as the US is, or to cherish and build our more democratic traditions.

If ever there were an anti-democratic, anti-free speech and coercive electoral campaign, in my 26 years in Australia and 40 in the US, this was it.

The government must ban proxy groups from polling sites and take other action to restore social cohesion and protect civilised behaviour during our exemplary and precious elections.

## **Restrict Postal Vote Distribution and Collection to the AEC**

Only the AEC should be allowed to distribute and collect postal vote applications and no how-to-vote literature should ever accompany a postal vote application. In Goldstein, the [REDACTED] Party distributed postal vote applications and included how-to-vote cards. In addition, the return envelope was addressed to a proxy [REDACTED] Party address.

This is deceptive and undue influence using unequal access to aged care, retirement and otherwise inaccessible communities creating an unfair advantage over [REDACTED].

## Donation reform and public funding

Major parties should be obligated to declare their spending and donations in real time. Candidates **from parties** should be obligated to declare the spending of their parties on their particular electorate campaigning. [REDACTED], [REDACTED] Goldstein declared her funding in real time yet faced a barrage of propaganda about the implications of funding from Climate 200 who was also transparent in their donation disclosure.

The current situation is that funding by Climate 200 has been represented as undue influence by an outside funder without any disclosures by the [REDACTED] (or [REDACTED]) party of *their* funders, including [REDACTED], other fossil fuel businesses, gambling organisations, etc. These donations don't have to be declared until long after the information could have impact on voter choices.

**All candidate donations and spending should be declared in real time.**

## Truth in political advertising

During this campaign, I, like others, experienced a deafening onslaught of claims about [REDACTED] I knew for a fact to be untrue and unverifiable. The proliferation of utter falsehoods -- distributed in print, claimed in quotes and articles in the mainstream media, magnified and accelerated by social media and then naturally spread by word of mouth -- has contaminated the democratic process in Australian elections.

There should be laws in place requiring evidence-based claims about opposing candidates, their positions, track records, funding sources, etc. and significant consequences imposed when those laws are broken. There should be an introduction or reintroduction of fact checking in lieu of the cancellation of the ABC's fact-checking work with RMIT and candidates and voters should have accessible avenues for bringing claims of breaches.