

10 September 2025

Committee Secretariat
Parliament of Australia
via online submission

Dear Committee Secretariat

Inquiry: The 2025 federal election

I am writing to raise a serious concern regarding the increasing frequency and intrusiveness of unsolicited political text messages being sent to my private mobile numbers by various political parties, most notably [REDACTED] (sent as [REDACTED]).

Despite not having provided my contact details or consent, I have received numerous political messages on multiple numbers. What is particularly alarming is that [REDACTED] provides no way to block, unsubscribe, or opt out of future messages. This lack of control over personal communications is both invasive and unacceptable. It feels like a clear overstep into personal privacy and digital autonomy.

I understand that political parties are currently exempt from the **Spam Act 2003** and the **Privacy Act 1988**, which allows them to send mass unsolicited communications without any requirement to offer an opt-out mechanism. These exemptions are outdated and open the door to misuse. Unlike commercial or charitable organisations, which are required to offer recipients a way to opt out, political parties face no such obligation. While I appreciate the importance of political engagement, these exemptions create a loophole that is clearly being exploited and has significant implications for privacy, consent, and digital wellbeing.

In an effort to raise awareness and prompt action, I have already reported this issue through multiple channels, including the **Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA)** and the **Australian Electoral Commission (AEC)**. However, the continued lack of enforceable standards for political communication suggests that stronger regulatory reform is needed.

No other organisation—commercial or charitable—is permitted to send bulk communications without an opt-out option. It is inconsistent and unfair that political parties are not held to the same standard. I urge the Committee to consider recommending changes to legislation that would:

1. Remove or significantly limit exemptions for political parties under the Spam Act and Privacy Act.
2. Require all political messaging—whether via SMS, email, or phone calls—to include a clear, functional opt-out mechanism.
3. Establish regulatory oversight and penalties for parties that ignore these basic consumer rights.

Australians should have the right to control who contacts them on their private devices. Political communication should not override individual privacy. This practice must be brought in line with broader community expectations and privacy protections.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. I look forward to seeing stronger protections for citizens in this space.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]