

The logo for Eastern Melbourne Climate Alliance (emca) is displayed in a blue, rounded rectangular shape. The letters 'emca' are in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font.

Submission to the Senate Inquiry on Donation Reform and Other Measures (the Commonwealth Electoral Amendment Bill 2020)

30 June 2020

Eastern Melbourne Climate Alliance is an organisation promoting actions to address Climate Change and drive the timely transition to renewable energy.

In the lead up to the Victorian State Election in November 2018 and the Federal election in May 2019 our members talked to many voters requesting them to think of climate change issues when they decided how to vote. We were appalled that many voters talked about their frustration, their anguish and their despondency because our major political parties are overly influenced by fossil fuel and land development interests that make large donations to those parties. There is a clear perception that our current democracy is being corrupted and that action is needed.

More recently, decisions made post these elections show that the influences of these major funders are being placed ahead of the current and future well-being of the population despite the overwhelming scientific evidence that these decisions are wrong.

Our recommendations:

We have considered views from other parties and we recommend the following based on our analysis of views:

1. lowering the threshold for disclosure of federal donations to \$5,000 as it is our view that \$5,000 is big enough to make a difference;
2. Preventing (making illegal) the receipt by political parties (and their candidates) of multiple “small” donations from the one donor;
3. Requiring donations data to be made public within a very short time (eg 3 weeks);
4. Removing any ability of the Commonwealth Government to overrule state legislation regarding political donations;
5. Establishing public funding and expenditure caps for election campaigns.