

PHAA submission on the Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Banning Dirty Donations) Bill 2020



Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

7 October 2020

Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Banning Dirty Donations) Bill 2020

The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) is recognised as the principal non-government organisation for public health in Australia working to promote the health and well-being of all Australians. It is the pre-eminent voice for the public's health in Australia, and seeks to drive better health outcomes through increased knowledge, better access and equity, evidence informed policy and effective population-based practice in public health.

Our Association has an ongoing concern relating to corporate donations to political parties and their impact on the making of health policy in Australia.

The "Banning Dirty Donations" Bill would make it illegal for certain categories of businesses (tobacco, gambling etc) to make any donations to political parties. PHAA believes that this policy direction is strongly in the public interest. **PHAA therefore recommends that the Bill should be endorsed by the Committee, and ultimately passed by the Senate and the Parliament.** The Bill would also compliment the desirable policy direction already taken by some state parliaments, notably NSW and Queensland.

This topic has already been the subject of other Bills and related Senate committee inquiries earlier this year, on which PHAA made formal submissions. Because the Banning Dirty Donations Bill had already been tabled by July 2020 (although this present inquiry had not commenced), for convenience PHAA anticipated examination of the current Bill, and incorporated our comments into the earlier submissions, allowing us to take the related bills together in an integrated way, and comment on them together. We hope this is a convenient approach that assists the Committee.

This being so, it seems convenient to simply request that the Committee now accept, as submissions to the present inquiry, this covering letter together with the following two prior submissions, namely:

- our submission to the inquiry earlier this year by the Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee into the *Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Donation Reform and Other Measures) Bill 2020* (submission #17 to that inquiry; attached PDF file filenamed as "part 1 of 2")
- our submission to the inquiry earlier this year by the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters into the *Electoral Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous Measures) Bill 2020* (submission #18 to that inquiry ; attached PDF file filenamed as "part 2 of 2")

Both these submissions make reference to the Banning Dirty Donations Bill, as you will see.

The PHAA appreciates the opportunity to make this submission. Please do not hesitate to contact us at should you require additional information, or have any queries in relation to this submission.

Yours Sincerely,

Terry Slevin
Chief Executive Officer
Public Health Association of Australia

