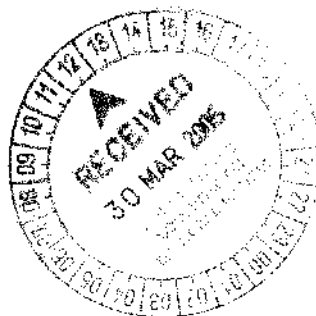




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SUBMISSION NO. 66

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Submission No. <u>66</u>
Date Received <u>30-3-05</u>
Secretary <u>[Signature]</u>



14 Lawley Cres
Pymble NSW 2073

29 March 2005

The Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Suite R2.105 Telelift 10.3
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Madam

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of 10 February 2005 and apologise for the delay in replying. Yes, I would like my submission of 13 December to go forward to the Inquiry.

I wish to add one more item to that list-- that Australia adopts non-compulsory voting at Elections and Referendums. I believe Australia and Belgium are the only democracies which observe the practice, so we are well out of step. After 80 years, it is time for a change. Compulsory voting is contrary to the concept of Freedom. People who are forced to vote generally do not think carefully about who they are voting for. Moreover, the old and infirm find it a burden, causing most of them distress. We are really talking about compulsory attendance rather than compulsory voting anyway. Look at the high informal vote.

Yours sincerely

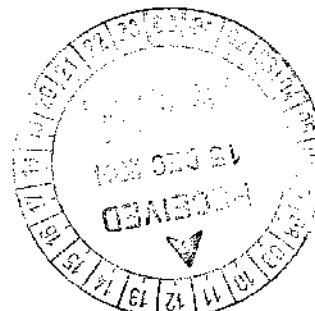
Michael Wilson

Michael Wilson

14 Lawley Crescent
PYMBLE 2073

13 December 2004

The Chairman
Joint Standing Committee
on Electoral Reform
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Sir / Madam,

I wish to make some suggestions to the Committee on electoral reform.

1. That we adopt 4 year terms for both the House and the Senate. Most Australian States adopted this many years ago without any discernable detriment. Two advantages are :
 - a) The enormous savings in the costs of elections, both for the Government and the candidates
 - b) Improved continuity and stability compared with the present situation, where the Federal Government spends most of its time in office thinking about the next election, instead of longer term strategies for the benefit of the nation.
2. The Senate should have full elections (i.e. all members) at the same time as the House. While this would require a referendum to change the Constitution, it would mean both Houses would always be in parallel. The current situation between the election date and the following 1st July for the new half-Senate would be eliminated.
3. The Senate voting papers be offered to voters in two forms.
 - a) One for voters choosing to vote "above the line".
 - b) A separate one for those requiring to fill in every square (78 in NSW last election). These would probably amount to less than 5% of the total. Such a move would -
 - i) Save a vast amount of paper and printing
 - ii) Make counting quicker and easier
 - iii) Be less daunting for voters.
 - iv) Reduce the informal vote.

4. Voters using the "above the line" method be required to complete **all** squares in that section – not just one as at present. Thus, the voter has the choice of preferences – not the groups who collaborate to rig the distribution in their favour.

Currently, "above the line" voters (95% + of the total) have not the faintest notion how their votes are distributed.

5. Voters should be required to show identification – driver's licence, health or pension card when presenting at the polling station.
6. "How to Vote" cards for all candidates be displayed in each booth – another great saving in paper and printing.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "L.M. Wilson".

(MR) L.M. WILSON