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AUSTRALIAN  
LABOR  
PARTY  
New South Wales Branch

ABN 36 197 855 036

31<sup>st</sup> January 2005

Ms Marianne Saliba  
Chairperson - Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Ms Saliba

Thank you for your letter dated 7 December 2004 about the inquiry into the administration of the 2003 NSW State election and related matters.

Please find bellow suggestions from the Australian Labor Party (NSW Branch). Most of these suggestions are of a practical nature intended to reduce confusion and make the State Electoral Office's job of administering elections easier.

- Canvassing for votes should be prohibited within 6 meters of a polling place and the regulations should provide a detailed definition of what defines a polling place. In federal elections some Polling Booth Returning Officers deem the building as the polling place while others deem the fence around the premises as the polling place. This causes inconsistencies and many disputes between candidates and their volunteers and Returning Officers on polling day.
- On Election Day parties aren't currently permitted to attach any material to fences around polling booths. This is not consistent with what is allowed on the day of a federal election. This inconsistency causes major problems for volunteers on Election Day because they are unsure about the rules and it's absurd that they are allowed to attach material to private school fences but not public school fences.
- The Electoral Commissioner should have the power to provide enrolment information to registered political parties and MPs. This is critical if MPs are

going to be able to perform their jobs effectively. They must be able to communicate efficiently with the constituents.

- We recommend that Registered Parties be allowed to lodge on Group Nomination for all their candidates. This is currently the process federally. This saves the registered parties and the SEO a great amount of resources which are currently employed to lodge and process nominations.
- The current requirement to register material for election day is a good one but the process for checking what material has been registered on election day should be revised. Currently it is close to impossible to make sure only registered material is being handed out and if you establish that unregistered material is being handed out there is no way to stop people from handing out unregistered material.

We propose that a copy of all material registered be distributed to all Polling Booth returning officers and that any person on the electoral roll be allowed to request and view material registered to be handed out on election day. The Polling booth returning officers should also be given the power to confiscate any unregistered material being handed out.

- The State Electoral Office should have specialist staff looking after every main process during the election campaign. So there should be one contact for Postal Votes, one contact for material registration, one contact for nomination procedures. This will eliminate the regular complaint candidates and registered parties make that they are not receiving consistent information.

Should you require any further information or clarification on any of the above matters please feel free to contact me on 02 9207 2015.

Yours sincerely



Karl Bitar  
ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY

# Fax

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<b>Re:</b> Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters	<b>Date:</b> 31/1/2005

## Comments: