

SUBMISSION NO. 80


Miskin, Sarah (REPS)

From: Liz Ingham [lizingham@vicbar.com.au]

Sent: Friday, 11 March 2005 12:30 PM

To: Committee, EM (REPS)

Subject: Submission to Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters	
Submission No.	80
Date Received	11-3-05
Secretary	

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11 March 2005

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Joint Standing Committee,

Submission to your Review of 2004 Federal Election

I am writing to support the proposal to enable voters to allocate preferences above the line for the Senate.

Currently, voters have a choice of two poor options. Either they have to follow the preferences allocated by parties, or risk an informal vote by allocating their own preferences below the line, on a huge ballot paper.

The difficulty of voting below the line was recognised when "above the line" voting was brought in. Senator Brown's proposal would retain the ease of above the line voting, while also enabling each voter to indicate their preferences. It's a sensible proposal, and one which would prevent party preference deals from interfering with our democratic process, which occurred in the 2004 election.

Voters shouldn't have to think of preference deals when they vote. They should indicate their *own* preferences, as they do in the lower house, and their preferences should be counted. They should be able to do it as easily as in the lower house, without having to fill in each number on a form the size of a tea-towel.

In a country where voting is compulsory, it's necessary for the system of voting to be the best one to allow every person, regardless of education, age, race or even their level of political interest, to cast a vote that best reflects their intentions. Senator Brown's proposal allows this.

Yours sincerely,

Liz Ingham