



Australian Government

Australian Government response to the
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters report:

*Advisory report on the Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Real
Time Disclosure of Political Donations) Bill 2019*

MAY 2024

Introduction

On 17 December 2019, the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters tabled a report titled *Advisory Report on the Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Real Time Disclosure of Political Donations) Bill 2019* (the Report).

On 16 September 2019, the Member for Mayo, Ms Rebekha Sharkie MP introduced to the House of Representatives the *Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Real Time Disclosure of Political Donations) Bill 2019* (the Bill). The Bill sought to amend the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, to “require the agent or financial controller of the party, branch or campaigner to advise the electoral commission of any donation received by the party, branch or campaigner that meets or exceeds the disclosure threshold”.

The Government’s response to the recommendation of the Report follows below.

**Government Response to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters:
Advisory Report on the Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Real Time Disclosure of Political Donations)
Bill 2019.**

#	Recommendation	Government Response
1	The Committee recommends that the Bill not be passed.	<p><u>Noted</u></p> <p>The Government notes the recommendation. Given the passage of time, a substantive government response is no longer appropriate.</p>

Dissenting Report by Australian Greens

#	Recommendation	Government Response
1	Amend the Bill to incorporate the provisions of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Lowering the Donation Disclosure Threshold) Bill 2019</i> , and provide for a cumulative annual donation threshold of \$1,000.	Refer to recommendation 1 of the Majority Report.
2	Amend the proposed s.305C of the Bill to ensure notification obligations relate to gifts over the disclosure threshold.	Refer to recommendation 1 of the Majority Report.
3	Amend the definition of 'gift' under the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> to membership subscriptions and payments for attendance at events and fundraisers hosted by candidates, political parties and associated entities.	Refer to recommendation 1 of the Majority Report.
4	Amend the Bill to limit disclosure obligations for political campaigners to gifts made explicitly for election-related expenses.	Refer to recommendation 1 of the Majority Report.

#	Recommendation	Government Response
5	<p>Amend the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduce a cap on donations to political parties, candidates and associated entities to a cumulative maximum value of \$3,000 per parliamentary term; and • introduce a ban on donations from developers, banks, mining companies and the tobacco, liquor, gambling, defence and pharmaceutical industries to political parties, candidates and associated entities. 	Refer to recommendation 1 of the Majority Report.
6	Revise annual return forms to require more detailed reporting, including specific classifications for each type of income.	Refer to recommendation 1 of the Majority Report.
7	Ensure that the presentation of political finance data on the AEC website provides greater accessibility and functionality of files to facilitate public research and investigation.	Refer to recommendation 1 of the Majority Report.
8	Increase the regulatory powers of the SEC to monitor and enforce compliance with the political funding and disclosure regime, including aggregation of donations below the disclosure threshold	Refer to recommendation 1 of the Majority Report.