

# Greens NSW

## Electoral and Funding Reform Policy



Revised November 2010

### Principles

The Greens NSW believe that:

1. Parliament should reflect the diversity of New South Wales society;
2. All citizens who have the right to vote should have every opportunity to do so;
3. The electoral system should be transparent and democratic, and ensure every vote counts;
4. Citizens should be educated to understand how to make their voices heard in government processes and how the electoral system works;
5. Government processes in New South Wales should be democratic, participatory and transparent;
6. The NSW Legislative Council should function as an effective and independent house of review;
7. The NSW Parliament should function as an effective and independent check and balance on the executive;
8. The electoral system must be adequately funded by government;
9. Transparency in funding and lobbying activities is essential to democracy;
10. Government policies, election outcomes and political decision making must be, and must be seen to be, independent of donations or favours from the private and non-government sectors;
11. The separation of government and the private sector should include restrictions on retiring MPs in their work in the private sector; and
12. All citizens should have equal access to and influence on political decision-making, government policy and election outcomes.

### Detail

The Greens NSW will work towards:

13. Implementing Proportional Representation in the Legislative Assembly through a system of multi-member electorates;
14. Requiring all council seats to be elected using proportional representation;

15. Recognising local government in the NSW Constitution;
16. Reforming the Legislative Council electoral system, with the election of Members of the Legislative Council for a four-year term;
17. Maintaining fixed four-year terms for the NSW Parliament;
18. Australia becoming a Republic and in the interim, reviewing the reserve powers of the Governor and working towards codifying those powers;
19. Increasing support for civics education in NSW schools;
20. Extending the right to vote to all citizens aged between 16 and 18;
21. Implementing a system where donations of \$1000 or more to, and electoral expenditure by political parties, candidates or elected representatives of \$1000 or more, be promptly disclosed on a public website maintained by the electoral office;
22. Prohibiting donations from corporations and other organisations to political parties, candidates, associated entities or elected representatives;
23. Allowing political donations only from individuals, who are citizens or permanent residents of Australia;
24. Capping donations from an individual to a candidate or associated entity of a political party at \$2000, and to a political party (including all branches of the same political party) at \$5000;
25. Allowing uncapped bequests;
26. Maintaining public funding for state election campaigns and extend this funding establish a fair funding system for party administration expenses to reduce reliance on donations;
27. Introducing fair public funding for local government election campaigns;
28. Prohibiting payment of a party's or candidate's electoral expenses or electoral advertising expenses by entities other than identified, registered political parties or candidates, or their authorised agents;
29. Significantly reducing electoral expenditure caps;
30. Treating as a pecuniary interest, subject to a conflict of interest test, all donations to political parties, candidates or elected representatives;
31. Introducing legislation for a compulsory code of conduct for retiring MPs in relation to their employment following retirement.
32. Reviewing the operations of the NSW Electoral Commission and establishing an enhanced audit function to monitor compliance by political parties and candidates, and increase funding for this purpose.