

Deputy Premier  
Attorney-General  
Minister for Justice  
Minister for Health

Executive Building, Level 10, 15 Murray Street, HOBART TAS 7000, Australia  
Ph: (03) 6233 6752 Fax: (03) 6233 2806  
Web: www.justice.tas.gov.au www.dhhs.tas.gov.au

M011002



Tasmania

Senator the Hon Joe Ludwig  
Special Minister of State  
Parliament House  
**CANBERRA ACT 2600**

**14 DEC 2009**

Dear Senator ~~Ludwig~~ *Joe*,

**Submission: Electoral Reform Green Paper: Strengthening Australia's Democracy**

Thank you for your letter dated 23 September 2009 and the opportunity to comment on the *Electoral Reform Green Paper: Strengthening Australia's Democracy*.

Firstly, I would like to note that the Tasmanian Electoral Commissioner, Mr Bruce Taylor, has made an independent submission into response to the questions provided for discussion in the Green Paper. I am aware of the content of Mr Taylor's submission and support the comments he has made in response to the Green Paper.

I support the general principle of harmonisation of electoral processes such as the recognition of enrolment on the Commonwealth roll for State purposes and the standardisation of forms and rules for enrolment and franchise. There is of course a challenge in getting complete harmonisation of electoral processes as each state and territory has adopted its own voting system in respect of its Parliament.

I have no significant concerns with the issues raised in the paper other than two concerns with the harmonisation of political party registration requirements. First, in a small state like Tasmania I would be concerned if all federally registered parties could be automatically registered for State purposes as this may result in a large increase in parties on ballot papers which have little, if any, real connection or affiliation to the Tasmanian community. This can be confusing for electors and would do little to enhance democratic processes in this state.

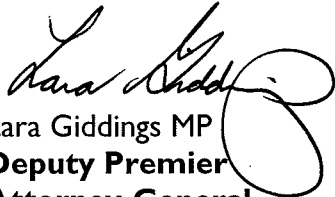
Secondly, the current bar for the registration of a political party in Tasmania is a statutory declaration of 100 members which must be published in the Government Gazette and three daily newspapers. This is considerably less than the 500 membership total required at the Commonwealth level although I note there are no publication requirements. Standardisation of the minimum number of party members may present issues across jurisdictions, for example 500 members may be too high for a small state and while 100 may be too low for a larger state.

In any event, I will be interested to participate in further discussion with my fellow ministers about the issues raised during the consultation process at our next ministerial meeting.

I look forward to hearing from you soon in respect to the outcome of the consultation in respect to the *Electoral Reform Green Paper: Donations, Funding and Expenditure* and this Green Paper.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to comment.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lara Giddings', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Lara Giddings MP  
**Deputy Premier**  
**Attorney-General**  
**Minister for Justice**