

Call for major revamp on political donations

The Country Alliance party is calling for significant reform on political donations in its submission to an inquiry being conducted by the Electoral Matters Committee.

Spokesperson Fiona Hilton-Wood said the inquiry was a timely opportunity to address concerns about unethical behaviour surrounding political donations and candidates on the eve of the Gippsland and Kororoit by-elections.

“The reliance of political parties for financial donations has been questioned for some time and the need to amend the current guidelines and disclosure laws are now necessary more than ever,” she said.

Ms Hilton-Wood said there was an immediate need to limit election spending, prohibit government advertising for six months preceding an election, impose a ban on all donations by organizations which tender for government contracts, limit advertising campaigns by advocacy and lobbyist groups, limit cash and in kind donations from unions and corporations and limit individual donations.

“Current disclosure laws allow political parties to hide donations through associated entities. Now that politics is an industry, the influence of advocacy and lobby groups who are predominately made up of former ministerial advisers know the importance of obtaining access to the right people. Political donations are a simplified way of gaining such access,” she said.

Ms Hilton-Wood said the unprecedented level of television advertising in the current federal by-election of Gippsland was a prime example of financial waste and highlights the need to limit funding provided by private individuals and taxpayers.

Contact: Fiona Hilton-Wood

Website: www.countryalliance.org

Admin: admin@countryalliance.org / ph 0425 746 066