

Electoral Finance Bill

Verbal Submission by Sustainable Future, 17th September 2007

This Bill is being promoted to provide *more transparency and accountability in the democratic process, prevent the undue influence of wealth, and promote participation in parliamentary democracy*, yet these high level principles are not being put into practice in the preparation of the very Bill that promotes them.

Submitters are being asked to submit on a Bill where we do not have access to:

- The targeted review documented prepared in 2006 or 2007 by the Ministry of Justice that was critical in producing the thinking behind this Bill. The Ministry of Justice implied this review was broader than the Explanatory Note in the Bill. See background paper 1.
- The Cabinet Minutes agreeing to the above review (April 2006) or discussing the process and drafting of this Bill.
- The *unimplemented recommendations* that are referred to but not listed in the Royal Commission 1986 document.
- The issues resulting from the *four MMP elections* that are not disclosed.

We propose that the Select Committee report back to the House that this Bill requires more clarity over:

- (i) the high-level principles (i.e. what are we trying to achieve: is it more voters, more information to voters, better dialogue over policies etc, equity of funds between parties?)
- (ii) the problem it is trying to solve,
- (iii) the costs v benefits of the additional administration,
- (iv) the total package other countries are adopting (rather than the two pager Hon Mark Burton gave to the media in August),
- (v) how any rules are going to be policed and who will police them,
- (vi) detailed research as to the options and the impacts of those options on democratic practice in New Zealand,
- (vii) public consultation with potential third parties and the wider community to that the best democratic solution is developed for New Zealand, and
- (viii) a review of the institutional organisations managing electoral reform in New Zealand.