

**Submission to The Electoral Matters Committee**

Steven Armstrong (Candidate Albert Park)

[REDACTED]

The Executive Officer  
Electoral Matters Committee  
Parliament House  
Spring Street  
East Melbourne Vic 3002

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for the invitation to submit to the committee. I have one matter that I wish to discuss, that is early voting.

The relevant part of the Electoral Act.

**98 Electors who may apply to vote early or by post**

For the purposes of this Division, a person may make an application under section 99 or 101 if the person—

- (a) will be unable to attend an election day voting centre during the hours of voting on election day; and
- (b) makes a declaration in the application that the person will be unable to attend an election day voting centre during the hours of voting on election day.

**Widespread fraud on the part of voters**

I attended the Albert Park early voting centre for the 5 business days immediately prior to election day. I was stationed outside to distribute electoral material. I quizzed voters as to their reasons for requiring an early vote. Reasons offered were children's sports fixtures, weekends away and shopping. These voters clearly lied when applying for an early vote inside the early voting centre. On another occasion I loudly warned voters that they can't do an early vote if they can actually attend on election day. This action clearly annoyed voters and I ceased.

**Anti-democratic disadvantaging of small political parties**

Early voting now runs for weeks prior to election day. A substantial portion of a of a candidates

votes are reaped during early voting. Attendance of volunteers at early voting is essential to a campaign. To summon volunteers for several working weeks of coverage of an early voting centre is impossible for small parties. Small parties are put at an enormous disadvantage by weeks of early voting. This is anti-democratic.

### **Recommendations**

Section 24 of the act defines the criteria that allows postal voting. I recommend that the same criteria be used to define the right to early voting.

Early voting takes place for one day, the Friday before the election.

I am happy to attend the committee to answer any questions.

Best regards,

Steven Armstrong