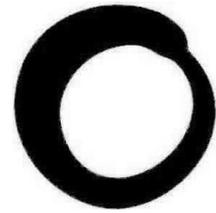


Executive Officer
Electoral Matters Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE, Vic. 3002
emc@parliament.vic.gov.au



Friends of
the Earth
Melbourne

Dear Committee members,

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Inquiry into the Conduct of the 2014 Victorian State election

We have just been made aware of claims made about our organisation in Submission 48 to the Inquiry.

The authors of this report make some serious allegations about our organisation.

They did not attempt to clarify any of their allegations with us before sending their submission.

We wish to categorically state that at no point was Shaun Murray or any other member of Friends of the Earth (FoE) employed to work on the state election in the Seat of Morwell. We did carry out activities in the build up to the 2014 election, but these were not in the Seat of Morwell.

Shaun Murray was employed by FoE for three months (from March 26 until June 26, 2014) as part of our renewable energy campaign, which was seeking to ensure the national Renewable Energy Target was not reduced. Additionally, we worked with, and provided support to Voices of the Valley in the aftermath of the Hazelwood fire. FoE's involvement in the Seat of Morwell ended on June 26.

FoE did not collaborate in any way with GetUp in the 2014 state election.

The submission also claims that FoE may have provided tax deductibility benefits to GetUp so that GetUp could employ Shaun Murray. The specific claim is that "Get Up may have wholly donated Mr. Murray's full time campaign services into FOE on a tax deductible gift basis".

This is a serious allegation and we are surprised that someone would make it without any basis of fact or even an attempt to verify the claim.

FoE does not endorse 'people, Parties or products' and does not engage in electoral campaigning where it aligns itself with an individual candidate or specific Party. We were therefore not involved organisationally in any way with the Latrobe Valley First campaign.

We would hope that Committee decides not to have Ms Wragg appear at the hearings

given the false nature of her claims.

We have requested one of the signatories of the submission, Ms Lisa Sinha, to reconsider the submission and amend it so it only includes factual statements and not allegations and unsubstantiated theories about what may or may not have happened.

Thankyou for your time on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Cam Walker
campaigns co-ordinator
Friends of the Earth (Melbourne)

August 7, 2015