

ECONOMICS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Report No. 37

Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019

QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

INTRODUCTION

The Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019 (the Bill) was introduced into the Legislative Assembly and referred to the Economics and Governance Committee (the Committee) for examination on 28 November 2020.

On 7 February 2020, the Committee tabled Report No. 37 in relation to the Bill.

The Queensland Government response to the Committee's recommendations in Report No. 37 are provided below.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends the Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019 be passed.

Queensland Government response:

The Queensland Government thanks the Committee for its consideration of the Bill and appreciates the Committee's recommendation that the Bill be passed.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice consider amending the Bill to address the concerns of small, not-for-profit third party organisations regarding the regulatory burden of the political donation and electoral expenditure cap schemes, such as by increasing the threshold for third party registration.

Queensland Government response:

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

To address the Committee's recommendation, the Government will move amendments during consideration in detail of the Bill:

- removing the donation caps from third parties engaged in electoral campaigning;

- increasing the registration threshold for third parties from \$1,000 to \$6,000 of electoral expenditure incurred during the capped expenditure period for an election;
- shortening the capped expenditure period applying to ordinary general elections;
- clarifying the definition of electoral expenditure including as regards advocacy as part of third parties' everyday activities;
- providing that disclosure of political donations received by third parties to enable expenditure for political purposes will only be required where both the amount or value of the gift and the amount that is applied that expenditure are both \$1,000 or more;
- reducing the record keeping requirements of third parties;
- removing the need for third party summary expenditure returns to be audited; and
- reducing the obligations on agents to support compliance.