



**Gladys Berejiklian**

Premier of NSW

**Anthony Roberts**

Special Minister of State

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **REFORM OF ELECTORAL FUNDING LAWS**

The NSW Liberals and Nationals Government will deliver on its commitment to reform the state's electoral funding laws to increase integrity, transparency and accountability in NSW politics, Premier Gladys Berejiklian announced today.

The reforms implement recommendations from the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters, which reviewed the work of an independent expert panel, chaired by Dr Kerry Schott.

“New South Wales has the toughest electoral funding laws in the country and, under the NSW Liberal and Nationals Government, that will continue to be the case,” Ms Berejiklian said.

“Our reforms will drive greater integrity, transparency and accountability in our electoral funding regime, and help protect our democratic values and freedoms.”

The reforms preserve the foundations of the current electoral funding regime while introducing important changes to reduce the risk of risk of corruption and undue influence, and promote compliance. The reforms include changes to:

- apply expenditure caps to local government elections;
- require political donations of \$1,000 or more to be disclosed within 14 days during the six-month period before a general election;
- require political parties to identify expenditure aimed at influencing the voting in a specific electorate;
- require political parties to disclose their senior officeholders to the Electoral Commission, and require senior officeholders to report breaches of electoral funding laws to the Electoral Commission;
- increase the maximum fines the Local Court can impose from \$4,400 to \$22,000;
- subject ‘associated entities’ to the same rigorous disclosure obligations as political parties;
- reinstate the ‘dollar-per-vote’ model for entitlements from the Election Campaigns Fund that applied for the 2015 State General Election; and
- cap electoral expenditure by third-party campaigners in line with independent expert recommendations, and prohibit third-party campaigners from acting in concert with others to exceed the cap.

The changes will apply for the 2019 NSW State General Election.

“These laws strike an appropriate balance between the right to participate in democratic election campaigns and the need to ensure that electoral funding arrangements are open and accountable,” Special Minister of State Anthony Roberts said.

"Increasing the transparency and accountability of electoral funding sends a clear message that NSW is off limits to those who peddle in illegal influence and corruption.

“We cannot and will not be complacent in ensuring that our elections remain free and fair.”

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