



CLEANING UP POLITICS

And banning developer donations

Nobody should be able to buy political power and influence decisions that affect us all. The laws on political donations need to be cleaned up - starting with a ban on political donations from developers.

The ACT Greens believe that the ACT Legislative Assembly should serve the best interests of all Canberrans. Those with money and wealth shouldn't be able to buy political power, and influence decisions that affect us all. The ACT Greens have long advocated here in the ACT, and all around the country, to end corporate donations and vested interest influence in politics.

The laws on political donations need to be cleaned up - starting with a ban on political donations from developers. The ACT Greens commit to electoral funding reform to:

- » Ban political donations from developers, corporations and organisations with vested interests;
- » Only allow donations from individuals in the ACT and capped at \$5,000; and
- » Require monthly public disclosure of political donations, and funding on a public website, in non-election periods and weekly disclosure during election periods. In the last week of the election campaign, the ACT Greens would require daily disclosure from political parties.

The ACT had robust donation laws in place in the 2012 election year that meant only individuals on the ACT electoral roll could donate to the political parties. But, these were ripped up by the Liberal and Labor parties in 2014 who voted to allow corporations and other vested interests to start donating tens of thousands of dollars again.

At the same time, they voted to quadruple public funding from \$2 per vote to \$8 per vote, right when they least needed to put their hands in the public purse.

Greens MLA Shane Rattenbury was the only member of the Assembly standing up for the community and against the weakening of our donation laws. He was voted down 16:1.



BETTER GOVERNMENT

Putting the Community First

The Greens have a plan to clean up politics

Government should serve the best interests of all Canberrans. The ACT Greens have a plan to clean up politics, put people back at the centre of government decisions and crackdown on lobbyists in the ACT.

The ACT Greens believe that a healthy democracy requires frank, transparent and accountable practices in all aspects of government. The ACT Legislative Assembly should serve the best interests of all Canberrans which means that money and wealthy should not be able to buy political power, and the meetings with lobbyists and other vested interest groups should be transparent and clear.

The ACT Greens also believe that where possible the community should be involved in making decisions that affect them. Putting the community first means making sure decisions are made in the best interests of the community, with the community.

> Participatory Budget Setting

Each year the ACT Government prepares the Budget for the Territory. Budgets tell us a lot about a government's vision. The ACT Greens believe that the community should have a say in the government's vision for its city, in what it values and in what is prioritised.

While organisations make representations to the Government about what they want to see prioritised, there is little opportunity for wider community have any input on budget priorities. Participatory budget setting has been undertaken in a number of places around the world to inform government priorities. It has been found to improve community ownership over government decisions and increase understanding about why decisions are made.

Integrating both the Government's strategic priorities and the communities priorities, and ensuring that our Budget is spent in a way that both has the best outcomes but also has community ownership is a complex process but an important one. The ACT Greens believe that it is time we took a look at how we could ensure that the community plays a role in setting the Assembly's priorities, especially in the face of reduced funding from the Commonwealth and competing priorities locally.

The ACT Greens will:

- » Conduct a review of the Budget process in 2017 to be undertaken in consultation with the community, with the express objective of establishing participatory budget setting processes in the ACT.

> Community Voices in the Assembly

Canberrans want, and deserve, to have their voices heard in the Legislative Assembly. The Greens believe in making decisions with the community, for the community, which means knowing what the community thinks and feels strongly about.

The Greens believe that the community should have the opportunity to be heard in the Assembly about Territory issues that are important to them and their community.

Currently the community are able to have petitions tabled in the Assembly, and the Government is required to respond within 3 months. Petitions that have more than 500 signatures are sent to Committee for consideration. In the UK parliament, petitions that receive 10,000 signatures trigger a response from the Government, and petitions that receive 100,000 signatures are debated in the Parliament. In NSW community petitions are debated at a particular time in the sitting week, enabling the community to be able to attend proceedings in the chamber. The ACT Greens want to see community issues debated in this way more in the Legislative Assembly.

The ACT Greens will:

- » Require that the Assembly Committee that deals with electorate municipal affairs (currently the Standing Committee on Planning and Territory and Municipal Affairs) to convene a day of public hearings twice a year to specifically deal with constituent matters; and
- » Introduce changes to the Standing Orders of the Assembly to ensure that any community petition that receives 500 or more signatures from residents in the ACT will also be debated on the floor of the Legislative Assembly.

> Crack Down on Lobbyists

The ACT Legislative Assembly should serve the best interests of all Canberrans which means that money and wealth should not be able to buy political power, and the meetings between lobbyists and other vested interest groups should be transparent. Big corporate interests shouldn't get more of a say than the community. That's why the Greens will expand the ACT Register of Lobbyists and its Code to include people who are lobbying on behalf of their corporate employers, who are clearly in a position to influence policy.

The ACT Greens will:

- » Expand the scope of lobbying to include people who are lobbying on behalf of their corporate employers;
- » Require lobbyists make 6 monthly disclosures of what lobbying occurred, when it occurred, who stood to benefit, who was lobbied and the subject matter of the lobbying; and

» Empower the ACT Greens' proposed Integrity Commission to receive and investigate complaints about lobbyists and the MLAs they meet with.

> A Modern Assembly That Serves the Community

The Legislative Assembly is made up of MLAs elected by the Canberra community, to serve the Canberra community. The ACT Greens believe that it is crucial that the Legislative Assembly is transparent in its operations and is accountable to the people, and that it plans for Canberra's long-term future.

When major legislation is rushed, processes are not fully utilised and the community doesn't feel consulted, then the community can lose confidence in the functioning of their own parliament.

The ACT Legislative Assembly has a proud history of being accessible to the community and working for the people of Canberra, and the ACT Greens want to ensure it continues to do so.

The ACT Greens will change the rules of the Legislative Assembly to:

» Require that the Administration and Procedures Committee assess bills as to whether they are major, and if they are, then refer to the appropriate committee for further investigation;

» Establish a Standing Committee on the Future to specifically examine long term issues, challenges and opportunities facing the Territory.

» Ensure that Assembly meets community expectations on sustainability including by reducing unnecessary paper use in the parliamentary processes (eg. tabling of legislation).



TRUTH IN POLITICAL ADVERTISING

The community deserves better

The ACT Greens will ban lies in political ads

The community deserve to have confident in their political leaders, and political parties. That means holding them to account and demanding truth in political advertising.

When it comes to elections, the community deserves to know that they are hearing the truth from political candidates and parties.

The Greens understand that in political and public debate there are different views about issues, and different ideas about how to solve the challenges that we face. But that doesn't mean that the community should be peddled lies.

When people are bombarded with factually incorrect information, they lose faith in the democratic process and are left not knowing who to believe. This does nothing to improve the quality of public debate or how we work together to find the right solutions for our city.

> Truth in political advertising

The ACT Greens will put the community first, and implement Truth in Political Advertising legislation in the ACT, to stop factually incorrect information being used to influence voters in the lead up to elections.

The ACT Greens will:

- » Legislate to require truth in political advertising. 'Truth in Advertising' laws will simply require there to be a ruling on the facts of the advertising.

It puts a higher obligation on candidates and political parties to check their facts before they authorise publications.

The onus on facts will make it much clearer for an independent adjudicator, in this case the Electoral Commissioner, to rule whether or not there are factual inaccuracies in a particular publication before polling day, and to require the publication to be withdrawn.

In South Australia, Truth in Advertising laws have uncovered 19 breaches where advertising was found to be "inaccurate and misleading to a material extent," which then had to be withdrawn during the campaign.

The Greens are committed to implementing Truth in Political Advertising laws to restore the community's confidence in the democratic process.

The community has a right to know that election candidates and political parties are not telling outright lies in the lead up to elections, and to have those inaccuracies challenged before they go to the polls on Election Day, which is when they really need to know.



ESTABLISH AN ACT ICAC

RESTORING CONFIDENCE IN OUR DEMOCRACY

The Greens will never waiver on our commitment to cleaning up our democracy. That's why we have committed to introduce an ACT Integrity Commissioner.

The ACT Greens will legislate to establish an ACT ICAC as a high priority. We will work towards establishing an ACT ICAC before the end of 2017.

> Establishing an ACT ICAC

The ACT Greens will:

- » Commit \$10 million to establish an independent ACT ICAC that will be responsible for maintaining the standards of conduct, propriety and ethics in the ACT's public services, politicians and the judiciary;
- » It will have the statutory power to conduct investigations in allegations of misconduct and corruption, including the power to call for and seize documents and enter premises, and hold public inquiries and compulsory examinations - including where criminality is suspected;
- » It will undertake prevention through the provision of workplace education and training, resources, and support for agencies and offices to improve policies and procedures where necessary; and
- » The ACT ICAC will report to the Legislative Assembly.

The ACT Greens will legislate to establish an ACT ICAC as a high priority. We will work towards establishing an ACT ICAC before the end of 2017. Public consultation on the legislation will be sought.

The ACT Greens want to see the Office of the integrity Commissioner suitably funded to undertake the work required. It is proposed that funding is guaranteed for a 5 year period to ensure stability, and that the authorising legislation and the work of the Commission is reviewed after 5 years.

Any review of ACT Integrity Commission should be independent.