

Dear Sir/Madam

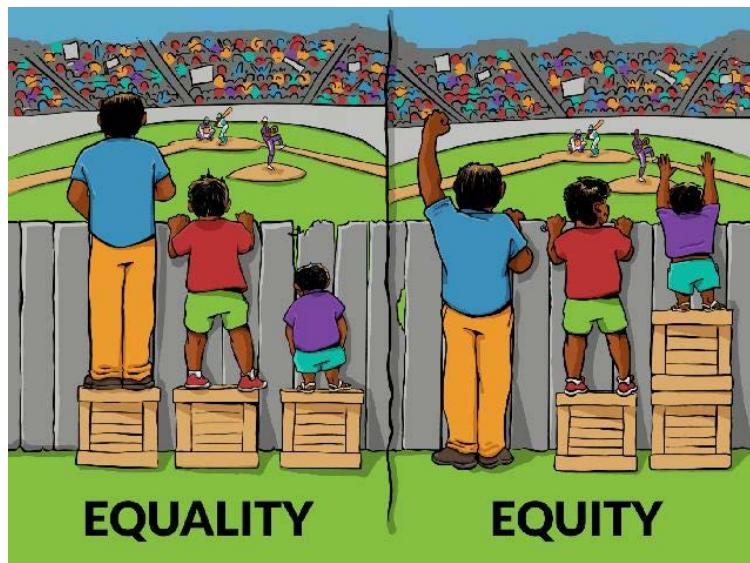
Please find below my submission to the Ministerial Expert Committee on Electoral Reform
Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Best Regards

Peter Robins

Electoral Reform - "Not on our agenda" said the Premier. It was, it is. It's now.

Here's the thing, "One Vote One Value" is about equality, equal measures BUT equal is not always fair. Equity Based done properly is fair & better for everyone. At present there is a weighting in the WA Upper House, the Legislative Assembly to allow wider & better representation. In the cartoon below, on the left is what the Government wants to go to, on the right is closer to where we are.



"It's unfair that one person from a Fringe Party can attract 80-90 votes statewide and get elected to Parliament, that has to be stopped, it's unfair. He should be tossed out"

Well yes and no. Firstly yes it is unfair & yes this is the specific area where WA people might like to consider Electoral Reform. In this particular case a person was elected with less than 100 primary votes. I'm much in favour of a conversation that discusses whether or not this anomaly in the election rules should remain as is or be altered.

Also in this case, such is the dominance of Labor in both houses whether Mr DaylightSaving Party is elected or not, he won't hold the balance of power. In Parliament he will still be a voice in the wilderness. Unless he brings forth debate that opens up debate or he is so out of his depth he makes a fool of himself, he won't block any Bill before Parliament.

Should he be tossed out? No. Not unless he's breached the laws of the WA State Election, much as I dislike it, no. Like it or not (and I don't) he's in fair & square. Has he paid the usual \$50,000 to the gentleman known by many as "the Preference Whisperer"? I don't know, but even if he did, unless its against the law there zero we can do. So unless there's a proven case of wrong doing, we're stuck with Mr 98 votes MLC and it'll make no difference unless he can make good points & get press.

"You're just peeved because your team got flattened convincingly so you want to stop all progress"

Well I didn't vote Labor but my team is actually WA. I want what's best for WA and I don't believe One Vote One Value is good for WA. He's a parallel example. Lets be full equal and lets not apply FULL EQUALNESS TO SOLELY ONE AREA

From now on everyone should pay the same set amount of Income Tax. It doesn't matter if your Twuggy Forrest, Gina Reinhart, Clive Palmer or an average worker, a low wage earner or someone on government benefits. Not a percentage, the same set figure every year.

THAT IS EQUAL, BUT IT'S NOT FAIR AND IT'S BAD FOR EVERYONE

We have percentages, tax brackets and a sliding scale for a reason. Its equity based and its fair. The same goes for the weighting in the Upper House. Now be careful because things get mixed up and you need to separate the issues that the Government is going to super glue together.

Issue #1 - Preventing fringe groups from getting elected by only attracting under a 100 votes or similar.

Issue #2 - Installing One Vote One Value

Two VERY separate issues, two VERY separate solutions. You can fix Issue #1 without bringing in Issue #2 but the Cabinet want to herald problem one as being unfair & use Issue #2 to fix it therefore reducing the regional voice.

Although these are Lower House seats look at this comparison it does point out the difference between regional representation & how disconnected some Metropolitan MPs are from the vast areas involved. Let's take the seat of Nedlands now held by Perth Labor Party. It has around the 30,000 voter level and comprises of 31 square kilometres. To put that in perspective you can jump in a taxi and ride the whole boundary before lunch time even if you stop for a few coffees.

Compare it with the seat of North West Central. It goes from the Indian Ocean to the WA Border. It comprises of just over 10,000 voters spread over 820,000 square kilometres.

Under One Vote One Value that will have to be amalgamated with say the Pilbara electorate which comprises of 23,000 voters & 292,000 square kilometres.

So close to the EQUAL number of voters per electorate (33,000 voters) but the electorate grows to 1,120,000 square kilometres. Equal numbers but unfair & grossly non equity based in size. With the amount of assets within that super electorate no MP can do the voters justice.

Some of the Upper House seats could potentially blow out to the same inequity

Also if we're to chase One Vote One Value because it's equal, then let's be FULLY EQUAL.

The amount of police officers per electorate must ALL BE EQUAL.

The amount, size & nature of medical facilities must be the same in ALL ELECTORATES, MUST BE EQUAL

The amount of TAFE facilities must be equal and the same in ALL ELECTORATES

The amount of subsidised public transport MUST BE EQUAL in ALL ELECTORATES...bus, train, ferry, the lot all equal.

The cost of all infrastructure to the user must ALL BE EQUAL no matter which electorate you live in. Yes, your water, gas, electricity, rates must now ALL BE EQUAL where ever you live.

Mobile Connectivity...pick the very best or the very worst connected electorate and everyone must have that exact same EQUAL level of connectivity.

Ambulances? Heck, in Perth no one is more 50 kilometres from an ambulance or fire station...same for EVERY ELECTORATE.

Already marginalised remote aboriginal communities will have even less representation in Parliament.

The picture is this, it is only the "EQUAL" that the Cabinet want to reduce regional representation in the Parliament. No other EQUAL complaint matters at all, only the political control one.

Doesn't matter how old you are, right now is the first time one political party has controlled both houses & the One Vote One Value is likely to make the likelihood of that changing more remote.

Ironic really. That which they say is to bring in equality will deliver more "equality" for one party over (& AT THE EXPENSE OF) the other. Will the pendulum ever swing back? Likely yes, no one stays in power forever, but it'll happen more likely after a term or terms of serious mismanagement and/or corruption or some other tumultuous term that pushes the pendulum the other way.

EQUAL IS NOT ALWAYS FAIR. ONE VOTE ONE VALUE IS A DANGEROUS WAY OF BRINGING IN UNFAIR CHANGES UNDER THE GUISE OF EQUALITY WHEN FOR REGIONAL VOTERS, NO OTHER FAIR & EQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH & GOVERNMENT SERVICES WILL BE INSTALLED TO ALL ELECTORATES EQUALLY. NONE.

Throw in one more point or rather one pointed question for the Pro One Vote One Value people... Senate Representation. Victoria & NSW have the largest number of Australian citizens so do the Pro OVOV people in WA one OVOV in the Senate? If so WA loses a lot of representation in the House of Review and it will be overly dominated by NSW & Victoria...because y'know, OVOV is fair & about equal representation or is that different and applies but doesn't apply if it is the same?

I firmly believe the introduction of One Vote One Value will deliver super electorates that MPs will not be able to properly represent. It will deliver an Equal but very unfair inequity to regional Western Australians. I plead to the Committee to oppose ONVO completely.

Thank you for the opportunity to add a submission

Kind & Best Regards

Peter Robins