

Deb Foskey MLA

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Majority government controls electoral law

ACT Greens MLA Deb Foskey moved tonight to retain the right of individual candidates to form non party groups to give themselves some chance of being elected at ACT Elections, and to ensure political donations are made public before, rather than after, the election.

“People have little chance of getting elected if they are just a name in a big list at the end of the ballot paper” Dr Foskey said.

“That’s why I moved an amendment to stop the majority Labor Government from abolishing non party groups.”

“My key concern is that there are many community groups very interested in this year’s election but they are unlikely to be able to all form political parties.”

“Consequently it will be hard for many of them to put their issues, such as schools, or local area planning, in front of the electorate at our important election in October.”

“All other non-government Members of the Assembly supported my amendment but, of course, the majority Labor Government had one more than the rest of us, with the profoundly undemocratic result that independent candidates will no longer be able to stand in non party groups and compete fairly with political parties.”

“I was also unsuccessful in seeking to protect the rights of people wanting to make a postal vote.”

“I was pleased to get support from the Assembly for my amendments to retain the offence of defamation against political candidates, as people running for election are incredibly vulnerable to unfair personal attacks. I was also successful in ensuring that short election messages and badges still need to be authorised by the person or party who produces them.”

“The key failure of both major parties tonight was their failure to support my attempts to ensure that political donations are made public before the election, rather than afterwards” Dr Foskey said.