



# Democracy Policy

Our democracy is precious and must be protected for future generations. As a nation we once took great pride in our independence.

Over the past few decades New Zealand has moved away from our traditional international partners. As the large political parties have become more reliant on fundraising from foreign sources, our democracy has been eroded. We have opened ourselves up to significant risks of foreign interference that the two big party blocs are unwilling to do anything about.

Advance NZ's democracy policy seeks to implement significant electoral reforms to protect our democracy, reduce our foreign security risks, and provide greater transparency around electoral funding. We will increase citizen participation in democratic outcomes, and give the people back the right to veto law changes where Parliament gets it wrong.

Advance NZ will implement constitutional reform. A constitutional Royal Commission will be established to propose an entrenched written constitution that politicians can not bypass. Any new constitution would be put to voters to adopt or reject in a referendum. New Zealanders will also be given a fresh opportunity to decide whether they want to keep MMP.

## Advance NZ's plan

### Electoral Law Reforms

- Toughen the restrictions on candidacy for Parliament so that only New Zealanders with a proven commitment to New Zealand, by way of a minimum of 10 years citizenship, can stand for election.\*
- The Governor-General shall have the authority to designate, after a recommendation from Parliament, any class of people ineligible for election to Parliament, where those people have had past involvement with a foreign state or foreign military that has committed human rights abuses or had past involvement with a terrorist entity.
- Hold a fresh referendum on the MMP electoral system at the 2023 General Election.

## Policy in brief

- Electoral reform to restrict candidacy for Parliament to candidates with a minimum of 10 years citizenship.
- Hold a new referendum on the MMP electoral system at the 2023 Election.
- Remove the foreign funding loophole by banning all corporate donations, and only allow for donations from people who are eligible to vote.
- Greater funding transparency with all donations over \$500 disclosed.
- Reform the Citizens Initiated Referendum Act to make it easier to initiate referendums and make CIR binding with the support of two-thirds of voters.
- Implement Veto Referendums where voters can initiate a referendum to veto a law when Parliament gets it wrong.
- Lower the CIR threshold to initiate a referendum to 5% of eligible voters.
- Require the PM to certify that all ministerial appointments pose no risk to New Zealand's security.
- Establish a Royal Commission to recommend an entrenched written constitution, subject to voter approval.

## Advance NZ's plan

### **Electoral Financing Reform**

- Legislate a “no vote, no donation” rule by removing the foreign funding loophole so that corporate donations are banned, and only donations from natural persons eligible to vote will be allowed.
- Require all donations over \$500 to be disclosed publicly on an annual basis.
- Require all donations over \$1,500 to be disclosed publicly within 20 working days.
- Legislate a ban on all political fundraising trusts.

### **Increased Citizen Participation**

- Reform the Citizens Initiated Referendum (CIR) law to make all CIR binding where two-thirds of valid votes in a CIR support a proposed policy change.
- Require that Parliament must enact legislation to implement a successful CIR within 12 months of the result being declared.
- Parliament may enact legislation prior to a CIR to provide voters with legislation to vote on which will be triggered by a simple majority vote in favour.
- Enact a Veto Referendum mechanism where citizens can initiate a referendum, within 12 months, to veto any Act of Parliament that has been passed.
- Reduce the required number of signatures to initiate a CIR from 10 percent of eligible electors to 5 percent.
- Establish a process to enable petition signatures for CIR to be collected online as well as in paper form.

### **Democratic Security**

- Legislate to require the Prime Minister to certify to the Governor-General, before a minister is appointed, that the MP being appointed poses no threat to New Zealand's security interests.
- Require the Prime Minister to take security advice on all ministerial appointments prior to making recommendations for appointment to the Governor-General.
- Appoint a panel of security and foreign policy experts to prepare a Foreign Interference Resilience Strategy for all New Zealand Government (including local government) foreign interactions.

### **Constitutional Reform**

- Establish a Royal Commission of Inquiry to report on proposals for New Zealand to adopt an entrenched written constitution. The members of the Royal Commission shall be distinguished New Zealanders from all walks of life, representing Maori, the social sector, environmental interests, academia, and the business community. Any proposed constitution would only be adopted, or rejected, by New Zealand voters.

*\* In recognition of the close Trans-Tasman relationship and reciprocal cross border residency, the 10-year rule can also be met where an Australian Citizen has recently become a New Zealand citizen, but has been resident in NZ for a minimum of 10 years.*



FREEDOM, SOVEREIGNTY, INDEPENDENCE

