



Alexandria Residents Action Group  
c/ 41 Suttor Street  
Alexandria NSW 2025

14 August 2014

The Hon Mike Baird  
Premier of NSW  
Parliament House  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Premier Baird,

At last night's meeting of the Alexandria Residents Action Group (ARAG), we discussed the government's proposal to introduce the 'Melbourne Model' of business voting in the City of Sydney and other areas with significant economic centres such as Newcastle, Wollongong and Parramatta.

We have deep reservations about your Government's plans in this regard and a unanimous motion was passed authorising us to write on behalf the members of ARAG to express our concerns.

The Melbourne Model is a fundamentally flawed system and its introduction in the City of Sydney would see the votes of business owners swamp the interests of local residents.

Our specific concerns with the proposed changes to business voting are:

- Granting two votes to 80,000 businesses would unfairly outnumber the 100,000 residents, and almost halve the value of each local resident's vote
- Non-citizens would be enfranchised and even favoured over Sydneysiders on the electoral roll
- Businesses could potentially 'spring up' within the City of Sydney for the purpose of fraudulently distorting the vote

The NSW Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters did not properly consider the pitfalls of the Melbourne Model in its Report (4/55 – March 2014), as it did not even canvass whether to extend the franchise to non-citizens or the potential for voter fraud.

Furthermore, the Government has not sought, nor had the benefit of, community input on this matter.

We ask that the Government not introduce or support any legislation to implement the Melbourne Model without full community consultation and proper consideration by the Parliament.

Sincerely

Ben Aveling and Vanessa Knight  
Co-Convenors - ARAG