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14 MAR 2013

Funding & Disclosure

Alex Lewis, A/g Assistant Director, Disclosure  
Funding & Disclosure Section, Legal & Compliance Branch  
Australian Electoral Commission  
PO Box 6172  
Kingston ACT 2604

Re: Application to change the Registered Officer of the Australian Democrats –  
March 2013

Dear Alex,

As in the case of the Change of Registered Officer form lodged with the AEC in December 2012 my signature is not on this second form to change the Registered Officer because again I have not agreed to sign.

As you would be aware, there is a dispute within the Australian Democrats about who is on the National Executive and represents the party and, at this time, I don't have any objective evidence of who can legitimately appoint a new Registered Officer.

I was appointed as Registered Officer in October 2009, well before the current dispute and have served in the position without any complaint for over three years. It is my desire to be neutral and to serve in the best interests of the party and I believe that for me to agree to vacate the position for a nominee from either side of the dispute at this time would simply be handing a disputed position to one faction or the other.

There is clearly a need to solve the current impasse within the Australian Democrats, and as the founding ethos of the party was to live by democratic principle, the only way to provide evidence of an Executive that reflects the will of the party members is to hold a new National Executive ballot that allows the members to choose from among all contenders from either faction.

May I request that you wait until you are confident about the legitimacy of purported Australian Democrats office holders before making any determination about this application?

John Charles Bell  
Registered Officer, Australian Democrats

11 March 2013

