

MEDIA RELEASE

Plan to name parliament lobbyists is a win for democracy; 67% support ending the “revolving door” next

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Democracy advocates have welcomed reports¹ the federal government is planning to let the public see who has access to parliament’s private corridors, and which politicians have sponsored which lobbyists’ passes.

More than 2050 sponsored “orange” passes were active as of mid-2024, according to the Nine papers’ report, giving pass holders the ability to go beyond public areas of Parliament House and easily mingle with politicians, staffers and press gallery journalists.

“Influence must not be wielded in secret – this change would be an important step in protecting the health of our democracy and reinstating voters’ trust,” said Democracy Counts Campaign Director Tom Mooney.

“Australia’s democracy is stronger than most, but many Australians are losing faith that politicians represent their interests.”

A 2025 survey by Essential Research for Democracy Counts found 72% of Australians think state and federal politicians mostly serve themselves and vested interests.

Mr Mooney said the next step should be implementing a 5-year ban on politicians becoming lobbyists.

“Australians don’t think decisions are being made in their interest, and when they see politicians going from positions of power straight onto the payroll of a business or organisation with a direct vested interest in the decisions they previously oversaw, it’s not surprising,” Mr Mooney said.

“Australians are seeing this revolving door in action, and they are asking themselves if our political system is rigged against the everyday voter.

¹ <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/decades-of-secrecy-to-end-with-parliament-house-lobbyists-unmasked-20260609-p605a8.html?btis>



DEMOCRACY COUNTS

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“The rules of our politics need to be updated to rebuild trust and demonstrate to Australians that decisions are being made in their interest, and not because parliamentarians are worried about what job they’ll get after politics.

Democracy Counts’ survey found 67% of Australians supported the introduction of a 5-year ban on politicians becoming lobbyists following the end of their political career, and net support for reintroducing financial support for politicians in retirement if paired with a limit on politicians becoming lobbyists after their political career.

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