2016 STATE REFERENDUM

A Bill for an Act to provide for fixed four-year terms for the Legislative Assembly in Queensland

The “YES” Case

Good reasons to vote ‘YES’ for fixed four year terms

To a Bill for an Act to provide for fixed four-year terms for the Legislative Assembly in Queensland

Referendum on Saturday, 19 March 2016

Fixed four year terms: fewer elections, better government.

The Queensland community rightfully expects that its Members of Parliament should govern more and run for election less.

This proposal will provide the certainty Queensland deserves, and take the politics out of calling elections.

Key facts

- Queensland Parliamentary Elections will be reduced from once every three years to once every four years
- A state election will be held on the last Saturday of October every four years, irrespective of the government of the day
- Not only will this reduce the cost of elections, it will give more certainty for businesses, encouraging jobs and investment in the Queensland economy.
- This won’t change the term of the current government, as this reform will take effect after the next election
- The date has been selected to avoid school holidays and major sporting events

Broad Support across the Community:

The Yes case is supported by a broad range of community leaders and organisations because it offers benefits to communities right across Queensland.

Workers:

“Queensland workers want more government and less politics.

The stability of fixed terms promotes sound policy development, not political opportunism that gives unfair advantage to the government of the day. Queensland workers want security of working rights, jobs and a plan for the future – not uncertainty, distractions, waste or snap-polls.”

Ros McLennan
Secretary, Queensland Council of Unions.

Business:

“CCIQ believes that a three year term is not sufficient time to allow the State Government to facilitate good economic planning for both the private and public sectors; undertake effective planning of the parliamentary timetable; or to concentrate on policy
and program delivery without the distraction of imminent elections. The "stop-start" growth associated with elections causes job creation and investment to be delayed. Quite simply, by lengthening the parliamentary term we are reducing the disruption to small business.”

Nick Behrens
Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland.

Tourism:
“Having a fixed four year term would be a relief to tourism operators and visitors right across Queensland. Everybody wants certainty to be able to plan holidays, events and family gatherings. Queenslanders enjoy getting out and about to enjoy the amazing experiences this state has to offer. We don’t need election uncertainty disrupting family plans.”

Daniel Gschwind
CEO Queensland Tourism industry Council

Local Government:
“Four year terms has served local government and local communities very well. It means proper planning can be done and communities right across Queensland have been better off. The State Parliament should be brought into line for the same reasons.

The Hon. Cr Tony McGrady AM
Mayor, Mount Isa City Council

The added time frame and fixed term certainty would translate into more efficient outcomes between State and Local governments. Modern Queensland is fast-paced and a four year term is an appropriate time frame to allow government to plan, implement and fully deliver on strategies and commitments.

Mal Forman
Mayor, Bundaberg Regional Council

Seniors:
“Queenslanders who are in their senior years want certainty and security in their lives. They want governments to have a fixed term to carry out their mandate and will work seriously at the task of governing well instead of constantly preparing for elections. After a lifetime of dealing with governments on a wide range of matters, I know that it is not possible to get major projects up and running in three years and under the current system it is usually less. Let’s give the principle of good government a genuine chance to work.”

Everald Compton AM
Seniors Advocate

Good reasons to support the Yes case:

A set date for a general election every 4 years
- More certainty around timing of State general elections, to be held on the last Saturday in October, every four years.
- This will prevent summer holidays being interrupted by an election and remove uncertainty for the tourism industry, event organisers and families who like to plan their travel.

Takes the politics out of elections being called:
- Having a fixed date and fixed term takes the politics out of election timing and prevents the government of the day trying to take advantage of calling a snap election.
- Policy development would be less driven by short-term political considerations and governments could act with a longer-term view, particularly for planning and delivery of major infrastructure.

Fewer elections means Queenslanders save money
- The last Queensland general election cost Queenslanders over $24 million to run.

Written and authorised by a majority of members of the Queensland Parliament who voted in support of the Bill.
The average time between each of the last 10 general elections in Queensland has been 2 years and 7 months.

A YES vote would result in fewer elections and cost savings for Queenslanders.

**Easier for Regional and North Queensland:**
- For Regional and North Queensland, it means the election period is taken out of the wet season, which can prove difficult for regional communities exercising their right to vote.

**Most other states and territories have fixed four-year terms**
- The current maximum three-year term for Queensland’s Legislative Assembly was introduced in the 1890s.
- All but one (Tasmania) of the other Australian states and territories have introduced fixed four-year terms for their lower house.

**Queensland’s local councils also have fixed four-year terms**
- The introduction of fixed four-year terms would bring our Parliament into line with Queensland’s local councils, which have had a fixed four-year model since 2000.

**The LNP, the ALP and the Independents support fixed four-year terms**
- The introduction of fixed four-year terms for the Legislative Assembly is supported by both major parties and by the two Independent Members.

**No change to the term of the current Legislative Assembly**
- Queensland voters elected the current Legislative Assembly for a maximum three-year term.
- A YES vote will not extend this term or affect when the next State general election will be held.

**vote YES to fixed four-year terms**