

- John Brumby (when Victorian Premier): part of a 'healthy democracy'

('Businesses pay to meet Brumby', *The Age*, 6 August 2009)

- Jeff Kennett, former Victorian Premier:

The professionalism of selling time has risen to such a level that it has corrupted the democratic process; it corrupts the principle [that] all people are equal before the law.

('Brumby in rethink on fund-raising', *The Age*, 8 December 2009)

- Former Prime Minister, Tony Abbott: lobbying at such events a 'time-honoured' practice.

('Lobbying is a Legitimate Part of our Democracy', *The Australian*, 6 May 2014)

- NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption:

The problem arises when the lobbyist is someone who claims to have privileged access to decision-makers, or to be able to bring political influence to bear. The use of such privilege or influence is destructive of the principle of equality of opportunity upon which our democratic system is based. The purchase or sale of such privilege or influence falls well within any reasonable concept of bribery or official corruption.

(NSW ICAC, *Report on the Investigation into North Coast Land Development* (1990) 29).

Contested meanings of corruption

High Court in *McCloy v NSW* (2015)

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There are different kinds of corruption. A candidate for office may be tempted to bargain with a wealthy donor to exercise his or her power in office for the benefit of the donor in return for financial assistance with the election campaign. This kind of corruption has been described as "quid pro quo" corruption^[50]. Another, more subtle, kind of corruption concerns "the danger that officeholders will decide issues not on the merits or the desires of their constituencies, but according to the wishes of those who have made large financial contributions valued by the officeholder."^[51] This kind of corruption is described as "clientelism". It arises from an office-holder's dependence on the financial support of a wealthy patron to a degree that is apt to compromise the expectation, fundamental to representative democracy, that public power will be exercised in the public interest. The particular concern is that reliance by political candidates on private patronage may, over time, become so necessary as to sap the vitality, as well as the integrity, of the political branches of government.

...

Quid pro quo and clientelistic corruption threaten the quality and integrity of governmental decision-making, but the power of money may also pose a threat to the electoral process itself. This phenomenon has been referred to as "war-chest" corruption^[53]. This form of corruption has been identified, albeit using different terminology, as a matter of concern both in Australia^[54] and in other liberal democracies of the common law tradition.

Jurisdiction	Disclosure	Contribution caps	Contribution bans	Spending caps	Public funding
Commonwealth	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
ACT	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
NT	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
NSW	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Qld	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SA	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tasmania	Yes	No	Proposed	Proposed	Yes
Victoria	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
WA	Yes	No	Proposed	Proposed	Yes

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10-point plan for democratic regulation of funding of federal election campaigns	10-point plan for democratic regulation of political lobbying
1. Effective transparency of political funding	1. Register of Lobbyists
2. Caps on election spending	2. Disclosure of lobbying activity
3. Caps on political donations	3. Improved accessibility and effectiveness of disclosure
4. A fair system of public funding of political parties and candidates	4. Code of conduct for lobbyists
5. Ban on overseas-sourced donations and donations from foreign governments	5. Stricter regulation of post-separation employment
6. Stricter limits on government advertising in period leading up to election	6. Statement of reasons and processes
7. Stricter regulation of parliamentary entitlements	7. Fair consultation processes
8. Measures to harmonise federal, State and Territory political finance laws	8. Resourcing disadvantaged groups
9. An effective compliance and enforcement regime	9. An effective compliance and enforcement regime
10. A vigilant civil society	10. A vigilant civil society