



Shima IBUKI

Independent Candidate for Hawthorn

Media Statement

For Immediate Release, 9 May 2026

Transparency Starts Here

Shima Ibuki, community Independent candidate for the Victorian state seat of Hawthorn is pleased to accept a crowd-funded donation of \$40,000 from Climate 200.

This donation has come from thousands of donors to C200, a crowd-funding organisation that supports community Independent candidates, who back climate action, integrity and equality for women.

Last month the High Court of Australia struck out the entirety of Victoria's campaign finance laws, finding that the system put in place by the Labor government rewarded major parties and incumbent MPs, while putting up huge barriers against new Independent candidates.

The system was grossly unfair. Under the old system, parties began the election cycle with a huge head start – an inflow of public funding in favour of incumbents and tilted against newcomers.

The old system allowed MPs from the major parties to access advance public funding, administrative funding, funding from their nominated entities and subsidiaries, and party membership fees.

That system provided an estimated \$793,000 of campaign funding to a priority Liberal seat like Hawthorn. As a new Independent candidate, none of these funding streams was available to Shima Ibuki. And her ability to raise funds was severely constrained by the donations cap.

What must change:

The Victorian government must legislate new rules that will not so grossly entrench advantages to the major parties while discriminating so severely against new Independent entrants.

1. The government should urgently reintroduce transparency and foreign donor restrictions, and make this retrospective.
2. If donation caps are brought back, to avoid further High Court challenges, the Victorian government will need to do it in a way that doesn't discriminate against new challengers. **Challengers should be given the opportunity to raise enough money to start their campaign before a donation cap applies.**

Quotes Attributable to Shima Ibuki, Independent Candidate for Hawthorn:

"Unlike the major parties, as a first time community independent candidate I start with zero campaign funds so I am grateful to accept this crowd-funded donation from Climate 200's community."

"The High Court struck down the Victorian campaign finance laws for good reason, as the system rewarded the major parties and incumbents while putting huge barriers up against new independent candidates."

"In the absence of any electoral finance laws in Victoria, my ability to raise donations and spend money is severely limited, which puts me at a serious disadvantage."

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