

21 February 2024

Hon Judith Collins KC, Attorney-General

Consistency with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990: Local Electoral (Abolition of the Ratepayer Roll) Amendment Bill

1. We have considered whether the Local Electoral (Abolition of the Ratepayer Roll) Amendment Bill (the Bill), a member's Bill in the name of Greg O'Connor MP, is consistent with the rights and freedoms affirmed in the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 (the Bill of Rights Act).
2. The Bill amends the Local Electoral Act 2001 (the principal Act) to abolish the ratepayer roll for local body elections. It also consequentially amends the Local Government Act 2002, the Local Electoral Regulations 2001 and the Local Government Act 1974.
3. Currently the local electoral system allows eligible electors to vote in local authority elections both in the city or district that they live, and in addition, in other areas if they own property in those cities or districts. Under this system a person with multiple properties in different locations can vote in multiple electorates regardless of whether they are resident there. The Bill removes the ability for ratepayers to vote in multiple electorates.¹
4. The Bill does not engage the electoral rights affirmed in s 12 of the Bill of Rights Act because those rights are expressly limited to general elections and have no implications for local elections and polls.
5. We have concluded that the Bill appears to be consistent with the rights and freedoms affirmed in the Bill of Rights Act.



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¹ We note for completeness that the practice of being able to vote in multiple electorates was abolished for general elections in the 1890s.