

Poll Indicates Coalition To Lose Control of Senate GetUp Calls for an Accountable House of Review

GetUp.org.au is launching an ambitious Australian first – **an intensive non-partisan national grassroots Senate campaign, to inform and educate Australians about the importance of their vote in the Upper House.**

“For the last two years, Government control of the Senate has made it little more than a plaything of the Executive. This campaign is designed to restore the Senate to its rightful role as the house of review,” said GetUp Executive Director Brett Solomon.

The announcement comes with the release of a GetUp-commissioned Galaxy poll that reveals **the Coalition would lose their control of the Senate if an election were held today**. 38% of those surveyed intend to vote for the ALP, 34% for the Coalition, while the Greens poll 13%. In this scenario, Galaxy’s state-by-state analysis indicates that the minor parties would hold the balance of power.

“No matter who is elected PM, the next Australian Senate should have the power to amend and veto critical pieces of legislation on the issues that matter to the Australian public – from IR laws to climate change. The Australian people need an accountable, independent Senate,” said Mr Solomon.

GetUp decries one-party control of the Senate and the House of Representatives, whether Labor or Liberal.

“GetUp is independent of party politics and our Senate campaign will reflect that independence. We will use new technologies, a grassroots field operation, and advertising to engage people with the political process and educate them on the way in which the Senate can affect the issues they care about.”

Since gaining control of the Senate, the Howard Government has accepted only 2% of other parties’ amendments (12 out of 666 proposed amendments in 2006), while at the same time passing 100% of its own (360 out of 360).*

“Despite the Prime Minister’s promises that they would treat the Senate ‘soberly, wisely and sensibly’, the Coalition has weakened the Senate committee process, routinely used their numbers to guillotine debate, and reduced the number of days the Senate sits in which to do its work.”

GetUp’s campaign, while national, will focus its resources in the ACT, South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria, the states and territories in which expert psephologists say control of the Senate will be decided.

The campaign is part of GetUp’s broader election-year democracy project, ‘**Australia GetsUp ’07**’, a campaign to highlight progressive issues.

For more information please contact Brett Solomon on 0407 419 320.

* Source: http://www.democrats.org.au/campaigns/senate_watch/

National Galaxy Survey
Conducted for *GetUp!* June 15-17, 2007
n=1100 (adults 16+)

The survey of 1100 Australians aged 16+ had a 3% margin of error nationally.

Senate Voting Intention	June 2007 Galaxy Survey	2004 Election Results[†]	2001 Election Results[‡]
ALP	38	35	34
Liberal / National Party	34	45	42
The Greens	13	8	5
The Democrats	1	2	7
Other Parties or Candidates	13	12	12

Interviews were conducted using CATI (computer assisted telephone interviewing) with telephone numbers randomly selected from electronic White Pages. Age, gender and region quotas were applied to the sample. Following the completion of interviewing, the data was weighted by age, gender and region to reflect the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics population estimates.

The survey had a large enough sample size to break out results in New South Wales and Victoria independently.

In New South Wales, with a sample size of only 283 and a margin of error of +/- 6%, the survey found 39% support for the ALP, 34% for the Coalition, 14% for the Greens, and 13% other. If borne out at the election, this would prove a significant change from 2004's election results, in which 44% of voters' first preferences went to the Coalition, 37% the ALP, and 7% the Greens.*

In Victoria, with a sample size of 257 and a margin of error of +/-6%, the survey shows 37% of voters supporting each of the ALP and the Coalition, and 13% supporting the Greens – while at the polls in 2004, 44% of first-preference ballots were cast for the Coalition, 36% for the ALP, and 9% for the Greens.*

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About GetUp: *GetUp.org.au is an independent movement to build a progressive Australia. GetUp brings together like-minded people who want to bring participation back into our democracy. GetUp has over 170,000 members nationwide.*

www.getup.org.au

[†] Source: <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/handbook/elections/senate/summary.htm>

[‡] Source: <http://www.electionresources.org/au/senate.php?election=2001>