

For Immediate Release

No home = no vote?

With just days before electoral rolls close it is more important than ever to encourage Australians with no fixed address to enrol to vote in the 2007 election.

Up to 60,000 of the estimated 100,000 Australians experiencing homelessness could fail to participate in this year's election.

"Elections have been lost and won on fewer votes", Homelessness Australia Executive Officer Simon Smith said today.

"Homeless Australians have a right to vote. Many people who are homeless – be they young adults couch-surfing, women escaping domestic violence or families forced from their homes by unreasonable rental prices - would vote if they knew how simple it is to enrol."

Recent changes to electoral laws have made it even more difficult for people experiencing homelessness to vote.

"If they're not on the roll by 8pm Eastern Standard Time Wednesday, they'll miss out. We risk forgetting the voices of homeless Australians.

If you know someone experiencing homelessness, let them know it's easy to enrol. They should do it today."

There are special provisions for people with no fixed address to register on the electoral roll and vote on November 24.

People experiencing homelessness can use a 'no fixed address enrolment form' available at www.aec.gov.au. It is also possible to enrol as a silent voter, useful for people who cannot disclose their names on the electoral roll due to significant privacy concerns.

"If any single group of Australians stands to benefit from greater electoral participation, it's those experiencing homelessness", Mr Smith said.

For further information and comment:

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