

Australia: Why you should become an electoral member of the SEP

Socialist Equality Party (Australia)
16 September 2021

The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) is conducting a determined campaign against blatantly anti-democratic electoral laws, rushed through both houses of the Australian parliament, with virtually no public discussion or media coverage, in less than 24 hours on August 25-26.

These measures are part of an escalating assault on the fundamental democratic and social rights of the working class in Australia and internationally, which the ruling class is intensifying as its profit-driven “reopening” drive triggers a terrible worsening of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Labor Party opposition worked in close consultation with the Liberal-National Coalition government to pass the legislation. This is a desperate joint bid to prop up the discredited political establishment and suppress dissent.

The new laws compel political parties that do not have a seat in parliament to submit lists of 1,500 members to the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), suddenly trebling the previous requirement.

With the Delta virus raging in many parts of the country—and threatening a public health system breakdown—the SEP and 35 other currently registered parties have only until December 2 to present expanded lists of members or be automatically deregistered. That would strip them of the elementary democratic right to stand candidates in federal elections with their party names on ballot papers.

In another naked act of political censorship, the new laws give the AEC the power to deregister parties that have historically significant political words in their party names, such as “socialist” or “communist,” if a previously registered party has claimed that label.

The SEP is demanding the repeal of these laws and the removal of all restrictions on the right of parties and

individuals to run in elections. This Sunday September 19 the SEP is holding an online public meeting to discuss the campaign and how to advance this fight. [Click here to register.](#)

The SEP is appealing to all supporters and readers to join the campaign and become electoral members, and urge others to apply to be electoral members. That will help ensure that we can advance—and make as broadly known as possible—a genuine socialist perspective at the next election, which is due before May.

As we explain on our electoral membership application form: “The working class must have a political voice, which the ruling class through its latest legislation is seeking to stifle. The opposition to the dictates of big business and its political servants needs to be guided by a socialist program that puts the social needs of working people—above all their health and lives—ahead of the private profits of the wealthy few. The SEP alone fights for this perspective.”

The application form sets out the basic policies with which electoral members need to agree:

- For a scientific program to eradicate the coronavirus pandemic against the criminal, “herd immunity” policies of the ruling elite.
- For an end to militarism and war.
- Against all forms of nationalism and racism and for the unity of the international working-class.
- For the social rights of the working class, including quality, free education and healthcare for all, and a decent, full-time job with permanent conditions for those able to work.
- For a workers’ government and socialism, that is a society in which the working-class democratically controls the wealth that it produces, not the banks and the billionaires.

The SEP stands candidates in parliamentary elections

in order to make our socialist policies known to the widest possible audience. That also provides voters with the basic democratic right to express support for a clear socialist program to oppose the disastrous private profit system of capitalism.

Anyone who agrees with the program and election policies of the SEP and undertakes to support campaigns for the election of our candidates is eligible to apply for electoral membership. Applications are approved by the SEP Political Committee.

An electoral member has the right to belong to a local electoral committee of the SEP, as organised by the National Committee, to facilitate the election of SEP candidates to parliament, and to nominate for selection by the National Committee as a SEP election candidate.

An electoral member cannot be a member of any other political party. That is a rule of the SEP, but also a requirement of the party registration legislation.

Because of the reactionary electoral laws, electoral members must be Australian citizens, eligible to vote and correctly listed on the electoral roll at their current address. If you are not enrolled to vote, we urge you to do so.

Electoral members must be ready to confirm their SEP electoral membership as soon as they are emailed or phoned by the AEC, which can occur once the party's list is submitted.

Electoral members of the SEP are also encouraged to join the many regular public meetings, webinars and forums organised by the party, and to apply for full membership of the SEP.

To defeat the agenda of the corporate elite and its political servants, the working class needs a new political leadership, based on the lessons of the strategic experiences of the international working class over the past two centuries.

That historical level of understanding, which is required for full membership of the SEP, is set out and explained in the SEP's *Statement of Principles*.

That is why we also urge all SEP electoral members to study the *Statement of Principles* and consider applying for full membership of the SEP.

To defeat the bipartisan attempt to silence the struggle for socialism, we appeal to all our existing electoral members, our readers, members of rank-and-file committees and all working people, students and youth: Help us recruit the extra 1,000 electoral

members that we need to retain our party registration and take forward the fight for the essential socialist alternative!



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

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