BCA Inform – 3rd May 2022

Federal Election

Hosted by Angela Jaeschke, General Manager Operations and Jane Britt, Team Leader Policy and Advocacy with Guest Speaker Jackson Reynolds-Ryan, Policy Officer.

Angela Jaeschke opens the event with an Acknowledgement of Country and by introducing the Policy and Advocacy team. She outlines what will be discussed in this event, starting with some discussion around accessible voting and then moving on to BCA’s ongoing election campaign.

The first topic discussed is electronic voting. Angela takes us through the recent decision made by the NSW Electoral Commission to decommission iVote. This was one of the primary methods of electronic voting used, providing an accessible platform for people who are blind or vision impaired. Different states have trialled different methods of electronic or online voting with varying degrees of success. At this upcoming election, only human-assisted telephone voting will be available. BCA will continue to advocate for the development of a robust and fit-for-purpose online voting platform that ensures a secret, independent, and verifiable vote for people who are blind or vision impaired.

Next up is discussion about BCA’s election campaign. Angela hands the chair over to Jane Britt, who will be interviewing Jackson Reynolds-Ryan about the campaign. Jackson explains the election platform and the on-going social media campaign which highlights all of BCA’s key policy asks. In terms of policy, Jackson discusses the three main themes of the platform: 1. Making technology work for all, 2. Improving government supports and services, and 3. A fairer future. The first issue in the technology theme is accessible voting. BCA is calling for all candidates to commit to a multi-faceted, truly secret, verifiable, and independent vote. Others include access to assistive technology, expansion of audio description, electric vehicle safety, and banking. The next theme is about improving government supports and services. This includes defending the NDIS, fixing aged care, and improving the DSP. The final section focuses on a fairer future, starting with the Australian Disability Strategy. BCA wants to make sure that all parties and candidates commit to funding the strategy completely. This theme also includes improving emergency planning,

After this, Jane asks Jackson about how someone might find the platform or get more engaged in the campaign. The [platform is available on our website](https://www.bca.org.au/federal-election-2022/?fbclid=IwAR0MDBTg1O48rQ4M7ORD3xJqomJyvqOWJeEbf8rHHnb7qdVPH4qMipzrOYA) and is linked in most of our social media posts. If members are looking to have conversations with their local candidates about the issues that matter to them, we’ve [developed a guide with some sample questions to use](https://www.bca.org.au/conversations-with-candidates/?fbclid=IwAR1e30GLOl1Yp-2CkEhW5TtrdvpYrhmu8yp_neo92UpHXlVj7BuLeMQAb_M). Jackson explains how people in marginal seats might get contacted a lot by volunteers and activist on the phone, at their door, or at their local train station. This is a great opportunity for people to raise questions or concerns. Candidate forums are also a great way to engage with all local candidates. Jane then asks how someone might go about approaching candidates. Jackson gives some tips and reassurance, saying that members of the community have a right to ask questions of all candidates. We encourage people to engage in whatever way they feel comfortable and safe to do so.

Next, we discussed what happens after the election on the 21st May. Our advocacy continues far beyond election day regardless of what party is elected. We welcome members to get involved by providing feedback and contributions to our policy work such as submissions and policy discussions. Jackson also mentions that if members have conversations with candidates during the campaign, they’re welcome to send him an email about the conversation and any commitments made. This allows us to track the success of the campaign. Members are also welcome to reach out if they want advice on how to get involved, or if they have any questions. Please contact our Policy Officer Jackson Reynolds-Ryan on jackson.reynolds-ryan@bca.org.au or by calling 1800 033 660.