**BCA Inform: June - What the Election Results means for our Community**

On Tuesday, 3rd June, BCA Inform was held to explore the impact of the recent Australian Federal election on disability policy, with a focus on the blind and vision impaired community. The session was facilitated by BCA President Vaughn Bennison and featured Corey Crawford, Policy Advisor at Vision 2020, who drew on his extensive knowledge in politics and disability advocacy to unpack the implications of the Federal election results.

Corey began by outlining the significant shift in Australia’s political landscape following Labor’s landslide victory, securing a 94 seat majority in the House of Representatives. He described the increasingly fragmented Senate and noted the potential for Labor to collaborate with the Greens to pass key legislation. Corey suggested that this electoral outcome could provide stability for at least two terms, offering an important window for sustained advocacy and reform.

Corey explained that despite few disability specific announcements during the campaign, notable shifts are expected. Of particular concern is the appointment of Mark Butler as Minister for Health and Aged Care, who also now oversees the NDIS and disability portfolios. This dual role has raised concerns about the potential medicalization of disability policy.

The discussion also touched on ministerial appointments and their influence on future disability reform. Corey stressed the need for strong engagement with the new government to ensure the rights and needs of people with disability remain a priority.

There was discussion about the possible introduction of a standalone Disability Rights Act or a broader Human Rights Act. Corey referenced the extensive final report of the Disability Royal Commission, which contains 222 recommendations. While the government’s response has been slower than anticipated, this is largely due to the complexity of implementing recommendations across jurisdictions.

Vaughn and Corey reinforced the importance of ongoing advocacy to drive systemic change. They encouraged BCA members to share their personal experiences to support these efforts and underscored the critical role of organisations like BCA and Vision 2020 in shaping policy outcomes.

An attendee raised the issue of exclusion of people who are blind or vision impaired from jury duty. Vaughn and Corey acknowledged the concern but highlighted the legal and systemic hurdles that make reform in this area particularly challenging.

Vaughn and Corey noted that concerns about inaccessible documentation are repeatedly raised but progress has been limited. Vaughn suggested engaging with the new Communications Minister, Annika Wells, to push for stronger accessibility standards.

The session concluded with updates on structural changes within government departments. Corey explained that the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) is transitioning from the Department of Social Services to the newly established Department of Health, Disability and Aged Care.