

Media Release



17 May 2019 / Media contact: Liddy Clark 0403 542 411

Youth Engagement in the Political Process is Happening

Unlike some jurisdictions, Australian's have the privilege of a mandatory electoral voting system. And, it is a right and a responsibility for all Australians of voting age to cast their vote in this Saturday's federal election.

For Generation X and Generation Y there has been a disenchantment with politics, and for some, the current political environment appears remote and irrelevant to the issues which are important to this demographic. As a result, many of our younger generation view politics as complex and populated by a professional political elite - trust by young people in our democratic institutions is low.

The Australian Electoral Commission confirmed last week that youth enrolment is at an all-time high, with 88.8 per cent of 18 to 24-year-olds enrolled to vote in the May 18 election. Young people are taking a stance!

And no wonder, when recently a senior member of the government comes out and suggests that one of the biggest problems in this election is that there will be young people voting for the first time.

Young people are not the problem in this election, and it is statements like this that undermine our young people - our future leaders.

Young voters may well determine the outcome of the Federal election on Saturday, particularly on issues they are passionate about and actively engaged in. They are not to be dismissed lightly.

Young people can drive outcomes based on their engagement in issues. As demonstrated with the action on climate change. [international research](#) clearly shows that, by preparing for and participating in such 'strikes' students are learning the skills of active citizenship, which they will carry into their adult life.

Politicians ignoring voices of youth do so at their peril. Once young people are engaged on a particular issue, they can mobilise, shift opinions and change election outcomes.

Active citizenship by young people will shape the future political landscape of Australia – one they will inherit.

ENDS:

Please attribute to VLGA Chief Executive Officer Kathryn Arndt

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