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PRESS RELEASE

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City of Sydney business voting bill will obliterate the small business vote

Clr Angela Vithoukas believes that small businesses located in large buildings will be the biggest losers if the proposed Fishers and Shooters bill is rushed through parliament this month.

As it currently stands occupier and lessees who pay rent as tenants are each entitled to vote as non-residents during City of Sydney Council elections.

But, the proposed new Fishers and Shooters party laws will limit voting rights to two people per parcel of rateable land. That means individual businesses located in large buildings will have to decide amongst themselves the two individual tenants who are going to vote for the whole building.

‘What is going to happen in the hundreds of large buildings around the city that house small individual businesses like accountants, lawyers, advertising agencies and other creative industries? The same applies for shop owners, cafes and other small businesses. They will have to organise amongst themselves the two people who are going to vote as tenants per building. It’s not feasible and it’s not practical.

‘How is this going to operate for small businesses located in buildings like the Dymocks Building, Broadway Shopping centre, other office buildings around the city and the new creative spaces around Surry Hills and Pyrmont? How will these new proposed laws affect small business tenants of new buildings that are planned for the Green Square area?

‘I’m calling on the Shooters and Fishers party to amend the bill to ensure that the democratic right to vote continues to be extended to all businesses as tenants and occupiers in the City of Sydney not just a select few’, Clr Vithoukas said.

The implications of this amendment to the current voting laws are a step backwards that will confuse and alienate the many small business owners that are an integral part of the City of Sydney community.

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