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## **Media Release**

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### **ELECTION ADVERTISING BLACKOUT A 'JOKE'**

Free TV Australia is calling for an end to the outdated election advertising blackout which applies only to commercial broadcasters.

Free TV Chairman, Harold Mitchell AC, says: "The rules are yet another example of the failure of successive governments to keep pace with changes in technology and consumer behaviour".

"The so-called electronic media blackout has become a joke".

"With reports that up to 40% of people are now pre-poll voting, the blackout is more meaningless than ever," Mr Mitchell added.

The blackout is a provision of the Broadcasting Services Act which was passed by the Parliament in 1992 prior to the introduction of pay TV and widespread internet access in Australia.

"We all know that from midnight tonight the political parties will simply transfer their advertising from television to other digital media platforms that are not regulated, such as digital news media sites and social media. For example, online news sites will be plastered with wall to wall political advertising, including video ads," Mr Mitchell said.

Mr Mitchell added: "We are calling on the new Parliament to get rid of this outdated provision which only serves to put commercial broadcasters at a disadvantage to all other digital media".

"It is hard to see what public interest is served by maintaining the blackout. Australians should be able to access information about elections on all digital media platforms".

**For media enquiries contact Free TV Australia on (02) 8968 7100**