



State of assistance? Political parties and state support in Australia

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the extent of state resources offered to political parties and parliamentarians in Australia. I chart the evolution of these resources, or ‘state subventions’. I argue that the established parties in Australia are the major beneficiaries of these subventions, despite the stated aim of some funding programs to open up the political process to new entrants. While minor parties have won Senate representation, the established parties continue to dominate national politics overall and to receive the greatest benefit from state subventions. I conclude that the concentration of increasingly generous state subventions on the major parties can be understood as elements of party ‘cartelisation’ in Australia.

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