

## “CONTINUED FINANCIAL GAG ON THE VOTELESS DEEPLY DISAPPOINTING” says Boris Johnson electoral challenger

Keywords: Political donations  
Committee on Standards in Public Life – *Regulating Election Finance* report  
Elections Bill

***“Suffragettes should have been prohibited from giving money to Parliamentary candidates in favour of votes for women”***

This is one conclusion to be drawn from the recent *Regulating Election Finance* report by the Committee on Standards in Public Life. Current law states that only those on the Electoral Register can make donations to General Election candidates. (A donation is defined as worth £50 or more.) The Committee says (Recommendation 2):

*The [Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000] should be amended to provide specific clarification that to be a permissible donor an individual must be on a UK electoral register.*

“This is manifestly unjust,” says French resident William Tobin, who encountered this prohibition at the last General Election. Although barred from voting, electoral law allowed him to stand. He did so in Boris Johnson’s constituency to highlight the 7 million or more people deeply affected by UK politics but with no say (overseas Brits like him, most foreign permanent residents in the UK, and emerging adults such as can vote in Scottish, Welsh and Crown-dependency elections). “It is unfair and undemocratic that those affected by being disenfranchised are not allowed to donate to campaigns aimed at giving them the vote.”

The Committee on Standards in Public Life report does mention (§4.4) “UK citizens who happen... to be working abroad” (implying voting is not a democratic right, but should be linked to economic activity) and remarks that if the Election Bill currently before Parliament passes, overseas Brits like Tobin will become eligible to register to vote, and then donate.

***But this still excludes the millions of other voiceless, UK residents highlighted by Tobin in 2019.***

“Avoiding manipulation by hostile foreign actors is clearly a complex issue,” Tobin notes, “but the Committee could have been inspired by the simpler and more-inclusive requirements Parliament has set for signing its on-line petitions – being a British citizen or UK resident.”

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Links: ● Standards Committee report to the Prime Minister  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulating-election-finance-report>  
● Tobin’s submission to the Committee in July 2020 (which somehow got lost!)  
[https://tobin.pagesperso-orange.fr/CtteStandardsPublicLife\\_2020July22.pdf](https://tobin.pagesperso-orange.fr/CtteStandardsPublicLife_2020July22.pdf)  
● *I’m Standing!* – Tobin’s account of his candidacy, with remarks on donations pp. 26-27  
[https://tobin.pagesperso-orange.fr/Tobin\\_W\\_Im\\_Standing\\_2020.pdf](https://tobin.pagesperso-orange.fr/Tobin_W_Im_Standing_2020.pdf)

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Campaign:

Web page      <https://tobin.pagesperso-orange.fr/>  
(flyer, high-res photos, media coverage, etc.)

Twitter      [https://twitter.com/@Dont\\_Vote\\_Tobin](https://twitter.com/@Dont_Vote_Tobin)

