# Independent MP Monique Ryan welcomes review into Chinese influence claims in Kooyong campaign



Independent MP Monique Ryan, a candidate seeking re-election in the affluent Melbourne seat of Kooyong, has welcomed an official review after a controversial online video linked her election campaign to the Chinese Communist Party. The video, which surfaced recently, featured two campaign volunteers claiming they had been instructed by the Hubei Association to support Dr Ryan's candidacy. The Hubei Association has previously been accused of ties to the Chinese Communist Party's United Front Department, an agency involved in foreign influence operations.

Dr Ryan, who has denied soliciting support from the Hubei Association, admitted to having a personal relationship with the association’s president, Ji Jianmin. In the video, one volunteer alleged that Mr Jianmin "required us Chinese diaspora to support her," while another suggested that "Monique is an independent federal MP, her policies are quite suited to the needs of us Chinese diaspora. It feels like she can give a voice to us, so we want to support her."

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) has confirmed it is aware of the video and has referred the matter to the Electoral Integrity Assurance Taskforce. This taskforce comprises officials from multiple government agencies, including the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) and the federal police. An AEC spokesperson reminded the public of the significance of Australia's secret ballot system, stating: "It is important to note that Australia has a secret ballot. Nobody knows how another individual votes. Your vote is your choice."

Dr Ryan has officially engaged with the AEC and the Department of Parliamentary Services to provide detailed information regarding her relationship with the volunteers and with Mr Ji. Speaking to Sky News, she said, "I've contacted the AEC and the Department of Parliamentary Services and given them the details about my relationship with those volunteers and with Mr Ji. I've said 'look if you've got any concerns please investigate.'" She added, "I've never had a one-on-one meeting with him and I've never had his support in any direct way. I'm not sure about the interpretation of that video, you know, whether it's accurate... Certainly no one's been compelled to volunteer for me, but I'm grateful for those people who have come out to volunteer on my campaign."

The controversy comes amid a series of difficult moments during Dr Ryan's campaign. In March, her husband, Peter Jordan, was filmed removing election signage supporting her Liberal rival, Amelia Hamer. Following the incident, Mr Jordan apologised, saying, "I unreservedly apologise for removing the sign. It was a mistake. I believed the sign was illegally placed, but I should have reported my concerns to council." Dr Ryan also issued a public apology, stating, "I apologise for the removal of the sign. It should not have happened. All concerns around signage should be reported to Council."

Further pressures arose for Dr Ryan after a problematic appearance on ABC's political program, Insiders. When host David Speers questioned her about politicians, including independent MP Allegra Spender, paying social media content creators to promote their achievements, Dr Ryan appeared uncertain and struggled to provide a clear response. She said, "We pay to generate the content we put to the voters. I'm not sure there's a big issue there," but declined to express a definitive opinion on whether it should be transparent to voters that such content is paid for.

Subsequently, Dr Ryan was involved in another media confrontation when she turned her back on Sky News reporter Laura Jayes during a question-and-answer session at an early voting centre in Malvern. Jayes asked for an update on Dr Ryan’s campaign and her views on politicians paying influencers for sponsored content. Dr Ryan ignored the queries and, after repeated prompting, left the reporter to her media representative, declining to engage further.

Senator James Paterson, a Liberal campaign spokesman, has called for a thorough investigation into the video. He stated, "If confirmed, this would constitute an act of foreign interference in our democracy. Australian elections must be decided by Australians only."

The Daily Mail is reporting that Dr Ryan and the AEC have been contacted for further comment as investigations into the video and related concerns continue ahead of the forthcoming election.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://pressnewsagency.org/watch-group-with-historical-ccp-links-required-chinese-australians-to-vote-for-ryan/> - This article discusses the video featuring two campaign volunteers alleging that the Hubei Association instructed them to support Monique Ryan's candidacy, highlighting the association's historical links to the Chinese Communist Party.
* <https://keepleft.com.au/project/monique-ryan-campaign-branding/> - This source provides information about Monique Ryan's 2022 election campaign branding, emphasizing her credibility and focus on climate policy, integrity, and gender equality.
* <https://www.crainsnewyork.com/politics-policy/nyc-board-elections-refuses-fire-head-who-harassed-staff-investigators-say> - This article reports on the New York City Board of Elections' refusal to fire its executive director, Michael Ryan, despite findings of harassment and misconduct, drawing parallels to leadership challenges in election oversight.
* <https://www.thecity.nyc/2025/01/07/board-elections-michael-ryan-racial-sexual-remarks/> - This source details the findings of a Department of Investigation probe into Michael Ryan, the executive director of the NYC Board of Elections, who was found to have made racial and sexual remarks to female employees.
* <https://gothamist.com/news/nyc-board-of-elections-head-keeps-job-after-watchdog-found-he-made-racial-sexual-jokes> - This article discusses the NYC Board of Elections' decision to retain Michael Ryan as executive director despite a watchdog's findings of racial and sexual misconduct.
* <https://www.westernjournal.com/missing-chinese-officials-wife-calls-communist-government-monster-says-eat-children/> - This source provides an account of a missing Chinese official's wife who criticized the Communist government, offering insight into the political climate and sentiments within Chinese communities.
* <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14658479/Monique-Ryan-AEC-election.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data