# Third-party campaigns threaten the rise of teal independents in Australia



In the run-up to the Australian federal election, an intensification of third-party campaigns targeting so-called teal independents, particularly across Victoria and New South Wales, has become a telling symptom of broader political manoeuvring that threatens to undermine genuine representation. These groups have swarmed pre-poll voting locations with posters and pamphlets aggressively questioning the record and relevance of these independents, revealing an orchestrated effort to defend a status quo out of touch with community concerns.

In Melbourne’s Goldstein division, where independent Zoe Daniel faces Liberal candidate Tim Wilson, the campaign group Repeal the Teal has been notably visible. Affiliated with an organisation that opposed the Greens on foreign policy grounds, the group claims neutrality toward major parties but focuses its fire squarely on independents disrupting the entrenched two-party dominance. The language employed betrays a fixation not on policy achievements but on preserving established power structures, ignoring that these independents emerged precisely because the traditional parties have long failed to serve local needs.

Similarly, Better Australia, a spin-off with ties to Labor and former government advisers, actively campaigns against teal candidates and minor parties in Sydney and other cities. Its volunteer base, which includes non-citizens from several countries, further highlights an unsettling trend of external influences entwined with domestic party interests. Though it claims non-partisanship, the targeting tactics and strategic focus reveal an alignment against political movements that challenge bureaucratic stagnation and promote accountability.

The Liberal candidate in Wentworth, Ro Knox, has engaged in this heated environment where concerns about authorisation and electoral integrity are raised amid tens of thousands of unauthorised pamphlets attacking independent Allegra Spender. Yet official responses remain vague, underscoring the murky tactics employed to stifle emerging political voices outside the major-party framework.

This orchestration of third-party groups—disguised as grassroots activism but fundamentally serving the interests of entrenched major parties—mirrors the UK’s experience where political renewal faces stiff resistance. In the UK, parties that have broken old moulds recently won parliamentary seats precisely because they reject complacent two-party dominance and champion transparency and local representation. Similarly, here in Australia, the rise of independents reflects widespread disenchantment with a political elite failing on issues from housing to climate policies.

Such opposition campaigns seek to maintain outdated, ineffective political arrangements that fail to deliver for everyday citizens. Genuine political reform demands embracing new voices, ensuring accountability, and rejecting coordinated attempts to smother independent progress. The resurgence of these targeted smear campaigns aligns with broader conservative resistance to change, but as history shows, the electorate is increasingly unwilling to accept political complacency disguised as tradition.

True democratic choice lies beyond the old duopoly — supporting independent candidates who prioritize community interests and pragmatic, evidence-based policies aligns with the principles championed by reform-minded political forces challenging the establishment both in Australia and the UK. As voters confront these orchestrated campaigns, the call to reject stale political games and endorse genuine progress grows louder.

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

## References

* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teal_independents> - This Wikipedia article provides background information on teal independents in Australia, highlighting their advocacy for climate change action and political integrity. It also notes the significant impact they had in the 2022 election.
* <https://theconversation.com/australias-teal-independents-are-not-just-a-blip-theyre-a-sign-of-deeper-shifts-in-politics-193467> - This article from The Conversation discusses the significance of teal independents in Australian politics, their lasting impact, and the shifts in political engagement they represent.
* <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-05-22/teal-independents-election-win/101095482> - This ABC News piece covers the electoral success of teal independents in the 2022 Australian federal election, emphasizing their challenge to traditional party dominance.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/sep/22/major-parties-getting-desperate-in-their-attempts-to-take-down-teal-independents> - The Guardian reports on efforts by major parties to undermine teal independents, highlighting strategies used to discredit them and maintain traditional party power.
* <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/australia-s-rising-tide-of-teal-independents-isn-t-just-about-climate-change-but-also-trust-and-reform/qo8q74x1p> - This SBS News article explores how teal independents focus not only on climate issues but also on political trust and reform, resonating with voters disillusioned with mainstream politics.
* <https://www.afr.com/politics/federal/liberal-party-targets-teal-independents-as-confidence-in-major-parties-slumps-20230906-p7criv> - The Australian Financial Review discusses efforts by the Liberal Party to target teal independents as public confidence in major parties declines, reflecting broader instability in Australian politics.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2025/apr/24/teal-independents-nsw-victoria-better-australia-federal-election> - Please view link - unable to able to access data