

PLEASE QUOTE
Your Ref.
Our Ref:16/9/1-02
Enquiries

80 Wilson Street, Burnie Tasmania
P.O. Box 973, Burnie TAS 7320
AUSDOC DX 70210
Telephone: (03) 6430 5700
Facsimile: (03) 6431 3896
E-mail burnie@burnie.net



Mr Glenn Worthington
Secretary
Joint Select Committee on the Constitutional Reform of Local Government
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Submission Number: 91
Date Received: 20/12/2012

13 December 2012

Dear Mr Worthington

CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

I am writing to advise you of the City of Burnie's support for constitutional recognition of local government.

In June 2011 the Council adopted the following resolution:

"That Council declares its support for financial recognition of local government in the Australian Constitution so that the Federal Government has the power to fund local government directly and also for inclusion of local government in any new preamble to the Constitution if one is proposed, and calls on all parties to support a referendum by 2013 to change the Constitution to achieve this recognition."

The Burnie City Council plays an important role in this area by providing the community services and infrastructure to meet the needs and expectations of the local community. It is critical that local government is able to obtain financial support directly from the Commonwealth to ensure that it is able to meet these needs without imposing excessive levels of rates. An example is the benefit that the Roads to Recovery program has provided to local government allowing councils to address backlogs in road infrastructure that had been created due to the lack of funds from traditional local government revenue streams. The local road networks that are funded by local government are essential to an efficient transport system to serve the nation as a whole.

Without the impediments that have been highlighted in the 2009 High Court decision *Pape v Federal Commissioner of Taxation* there would be many more areas where direct funding from the Commonwealth to local government would be a more efficient and beneficial mechanism for the Australian community.

The Burnie City Council is aware that the Australian Local Government Association as well as our state Association is fully supportive of this recognition.

The Burnie City Council urges the honourable members of the Committee to support the conducting of a referendum to provide financial recognition of local government so that the Commonwealth may provide direct funding to local government without fear or favour.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Wardlaw
GENERAL MANAGER