



Our Ref: 3869356  
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**Submission Number: 136**  
**Date Received: 17/01/2013**



14 January 2013

Committee Secretary  
Joint Standing Committee on the Constitutional  
Recognition of Local Government  
Department of House of Representatives  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Committee Secretary

### **Constitutional Recognition of Local Government**

The Council supports the Constitutional Recognition of local government and lodged a submission on 3 November 2011 to the Expert Panel on the Constitutional Recognition of Local Government advocating for the recognition of local government.

The Council was represented at the Local Constitutional Summit that was held in Melbourne in 2008 and the Council formally considered this matter at the Ordinary Meeting held on 21 February 2011.

It has been the Council's longstanding position that Local Government should be recognised in the Australian Constitution, and over the years, the Council has sponsored and supported motions to the National General Assembly of Local Government and the Local Government Association Conference in support of this stand.

At its Ordinary Meeting on 4 August 2008 the Council reaffirmed its support for the Constitutional Recognition of local government, and on 21 February 2011 at the Policy Review Meeting it resolved "*Council call on all political parties to support a referendum by 2013 to change the Australian Constitution to achieve Constitutional recognition for local government*".

The Council supports the Australian Local Government Association preference for a pragmatic and simple change to Section 96 of the Australian Constitution to read "Parliament may grant financial assistance to any state or local government body formed under a law of a state or territory". This proposed amendment will allow direct funding of local government to take place. This proposed amendment to the Constitution will give assurance to local government that the Federal Government has the power to provide direct funding to local government where this is in the national interest.

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The Council believes that for the proposed recognition of local government in the Constitution to succeed the process should be carried out in partnership with as many local citizens and community groups as possible, in accessible forums. Additionally, the Council believes that an on-going media campaign is required and supports a publicly funded national education and awareness campaign to inform the public about the Constitution, how to change it, and about the proposed amendment to the Constitution being asked before the referendum.

In the event that further information can be provided to the Secretariat, please do not hesitate to contact Glenn Schuil, Council's Senior Governance Officer on

Yours faithfully

**Glenn Schuil**  
**Senior Governance Officer**