



The Heart of NSW

27 November, 2012

Secretary
Constitutional Recognition of Local Government (select)
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on this very important issue.

Local Government has been a feature of life in Australia since early times and certainly well before the constitution. As the level of government closest to the people it provides on ground services and support essential to life as we know it today. Its recognition in the Commonwealth Constitution is long overdue, I and Lachlan Shire Council and I believe the residents of the area urge your committee to support the notion before you and to move towards a referendum on this question.

In support of this submission I provide the following additional relevant information...

1. Lachlan Shire Council first addressed this issue several years ago but importantly passed a resolution of support in March 2011 (117/2011) calling on the Federal Government to include a question recognising local government in the constitution.
2. Lachlan Shire Council is a large rural Council covering a considerable part of central western NSW. Our population is small with many large rural properties and a high indigenous proportion of locals. Without the support of the Federal Government our Council would not exist let alone provide the support that we do offer residents. Funding from the Federal Government comes in the form of grants in quite a number of areas including road funding, aged care, children's services, water supply, environmental programs, social programs and special events. The Federal Government gets amazing value for money out of these grants with Council able to match funding in many instances and or attract funding from the State or locally. A great example is the Road to Recovery program where Council is able to attract state grants and together with its own funds is able to deliver improvements to the local road system not otherwise possible. A loss of these grants through some form of technical oversight would be devastating.
3. Section 96 of the constitution should be amended to allow parliament to grant financial assistance to any legitimate local council.
4. Efforts to have Constitutional recognition passed by the Australian people have failed in the past not because of the merit of the case but because at that time there was a lack of bipartisan

Lachlan Shire Council



support. We urge all sides of parliament to get together and fix this anomaly in the legislative framework.

5. To that end Lachlan Shire stands ready to do its best to promote the positive case in the referendum but also recognises that there is a need for a national program of promotion showing the people that the Parliament of Australia is united in its position and solidly backing this case.

I wish you well in your deliberations and would be more than happy to give evidence on any aspect of this submission should you consider that to be helpful.

Yours faithfully,

Councillor Des Manwaring
Mayor