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

Dear Mr Worthington

The purpose of this correspondence is to advise the Joint Select Committee on the Constitutional Recognition of Local Government of the Sutherland Shire Council's support for financial recognition of Local Government in Australia's constitution.

Local Government has exhaustively looked at the options which could be put to electors to recognise the important role that Local Government plays in the lives of all Australians and the need that this be recognised in our Constitution.

The Australian Local Government Association, having considered expert advice is looking to an amendment of Section 96 of the Constitution to include reference to Local Government. Due to recent court cases there is a need to protect direct funding from the Federal Government to Local Government, particularly for community services and infrastructure. It is well recognised that Local Government is best placed to deliver local services and infrastructure and through funding directly to Local Government the Federal Government achieves efficiency and value for money. Taxpayers should have certainty that funds are not channelled through the State bureaucracy and can be spent directly on the projects involved and not have an unnecessary administrative cost attached.

There are a number of programs, such as Roads to Recovery which are aimed at protecting the nation's road network and infrastructure. It is essential that certainty remains and communities can see their tax dollars improving their local areas.

Council appreciates the opportunity of making this submission to the Joint Parliamentary Committee.

Yours sincerely

J W Rayner
General Manager