



Customer Service Centres & Libraries

Playford Civic Centre
10 Playford Boulevard
Elizabeth SA 5112

Shop 51
Munno Para Shopping City
600 Main North Road
Smithfield SA 5114

Postal Address

City of Playford
12 Bishopstone Road
Davoren Park SA 5113

1 March 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

Submission No. 251

Date Received: 01/03/2013



Email: jsclg@aph.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

Constitutional Recognition of Local Government

The City of Playford represents a community of over 82,000 people and with a growth rate of over 3% one of the fastest growing local government areas in South Australia. The Council is democratically elected under the Local Government Act 1999 (SA) to represent and provide infrastructure and services to our community.

The Council formally resolved to support the option of financial recognition of Local Government in the Australian Constitution in 10 May 2011 and remains committed to that support.

This Council area relies on Federal funding for roads under the Roads to Recovery program and the Council is proud to have supported nation building under the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program. Both of these programs have delivered funding to our community efficiently and effectively through direct transfer from the Commonwealth.

Recent High Court judgments have raised considerable uncertainty regarding direct funding to Councils from the Australian Government. This uncertainty is creating a lack of confidence in the sorts of partnerships which Councils can forge with the Commonwealth.

This Council supports an amendment to Section 96 of the Constitution so that it would read: "Parliament may grant financial assistance to any State or Local Government body formed by or under a law of a State or Territory." This amendment would validate programs such as Roads to Recovery without creating any broader capacity for the Commonwealth to legislate about Local Government. Council

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values the relationship it has with the SA Government but is aware State funding for Councils in SA is the lowest per capita in the nation.

Council supports a referendum being held at a time most likely to achieve a successful result. The current support from all political parties and independents in the Federal Parliament is an important factor in giving a referendum the best chance of success.

Another key factor in the success of a referendum is likely to be the level of understanding in the community about the Australian Constitution, the role it plays in society today and how it can be amended. Council supports a publicly funded national education and awareness campaign to support an informed vote in the community.

Finally Council is a member of the Local Government Association of SA and supports its work and that of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) in representing Local Government on this issue.

Yours faithfully

Tim Jackson
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER