



To the Secretary and members of the Committee considering recognition of local government, I am writing to say that I do not approve or agree with local "government" being recognized in the Australian Constitution, and being "added on" as an afterthought.

It is sufficient to have the Federal Government with its own job of administration, and the State Governments doing their own jobs. The work of local "government" will not be enhanced by inclusion in the Constitution, as its main focus should remain as "roads and rubbish" - "rates" should only be included if the structure and administration of rate reckoning and allocation is completely overhauled. The local "governments" seem to have grown into money squandering entities, and should not be encouraged.

The days of my grandfathers participating in local government as councillors, and magistrates were effective, and genuinely local. And they provided their own horses, and jinkers, at their own expense, and travelled around to meetings and keeping up with the local population in heat and rain, and on moonlit nights, leaving their families alone for considerable amounts of time when travelling time is included in the hours they spent on local affairs! Keeping in touch was hard work, with no easy means of communication such as we have today. And yet they managed, and felt privileged to undertake the work they did, voluntarily!

Everyone took "turns" at being the Shire President or Mayor and it was a mark of respect to be elected to represent one's fellow residents.

"Bigger" does not mean "Better". The idea of messing with the Constitution is to be deplored. It has served us very well for over 100 years, and I do not condone "goal post shifting" to appease agitators who have no appreciation of our history, or the input of previous generations of public spirited citizens to our Municipal structure.

And putting up the idea of "including local government in the Constitution" is underhanded and deceitful without a proper education of the present population, with the pros and cons being equally presented and debated in full, in the media and with mailouts. Any such change should be considered carefully. Past referendums have failed on this issue. Why "fix" something that isn't "broken"?

Sincerely, Wendy Bitans,