



Date >> 22 January 2013

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

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Dear Sir/Madam

On behalf of the Townsville City Council I present Council's submission to the Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Local Government.

Townsville City resolved on 18 December 2012 to confirm its strong support of financial recognition of local government in the Constitution after making a submission to the Expert Panel in 2011.

Council advocates for the Federal government to provide funding direct to councils where it is in the national interest to strengthen the current Roads to Recovery program and to ensure that our local communities receive the services and infrastructure they deserve.

Council supports the amendment of Section 96 of the Constitution to read "*Parliament may grant financial assistance to any State or Local Government Body formed by or under a law of a state or territory.*" The amendment will remove the uncertainty that has arisen from recent High Court decisions (*Pape Case* and *Williams Case*) and provide the way forward for the important funding relationships between Federal and local governments.

Market research currently indicates that a majority of Queenslanders would support a referendum to recognise local government in the Australian Constitution. To be successful nationally, a publicly funded national education and awareness campaign will be required to give voters the opportunity to make an informed decision. In addition council urges the joint committee to recognise the importance of bi-partisan

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support of the constitutional recognition of local government to maximise the chance of success.

Council congratulates the Federal Government's decision to establish the Joint Committee and seeks the Committee's support to achieve constitutional recognition for the long term sustainability of local government.

Thank you for the opportunity of making a submission.

Yours sincerely

RAY BURTON

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER