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From: Hamish Danks Brown

Sent: Friday, 31 August 2007 11:05 AM

To: Committee, FPA (SEN)

Cc:

Subject: Inquiry into the Provisions of the Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Democratic Plebiscites) Bill 2007

Dear Senate Standing Committee - Finance and Public Administration

I am writing to express my appreciation for the Senate committee inquiry coming to Noosa yesterday for a session of the inquiry you are currently conducting into the provisions of the Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Democratic Plebiscites) Bill 2007.

As an interested member of the public who is opposed to the forced amalgamations of local government in Queensland, I have to say that I was very impressed with the conduct of the inquiry, and the articulate, informed, lucid and purposeful manner in which all of the Senators participated in the inquiry, and the many witnesses appearing before the inquiry who made submissions to your committee on this issue. In particular, I concur wholeheartedly with Senator Andrew Murray on the wider historical importance of this issue in the history of the systems government in this country beyond the ephemeral politics of the day. There is a significant issue of the nature of democracy (direct or otherwise) and the evolution of the relationship between the government and the people at stake in this process.

Thank you also for allowing me to speak, however briefly, during the open forum at the conclusion of proceedings.

I continue to maintain that as well as the democratic principles that need to be restored and enshrined as a result of the Queensland local government reform legislation, that every ratepayer and resident of every local government area has been and remains a party to a clear and caveatable interest in their council in the form of rates, levies and other charges, community governance and through every other relationship or arrangement (e.g. leases, grants, funding, support) that exists between local government and its constituents, whether as individuals or through the many community organisations, clubs, businesses and other organisations that have dealings and/or transactions with councils.

Unless the state and federal government are willingly granted the consent of the governed for the better good on this matter, then the governed will be compelled to act to prevail to secure their democratic rights and to ensure the recognition of local government in the Australian Constitution.

Regards

Hamish Danks Brown