

## Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

### INQUIRY INTO COMMONWEALTH ELECTORAL AMENDMENT (DEMOCRATIC PLEBISCITES) BILL 2007

#### Index of Documents Tabled at Noosa Hearing

Thursday, 30 August 2007

Date	Lodged By	Title/Subject	No of Pages
30/8/07	Mr Glen Elmes, MP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Media Release – <i>Elmes Hails Federal Inquiry</i>, dated 29/8/07</li> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Media Release – <i>A Plea for Sanity</i>, dated 20/8/07</li> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Media Release – <i>Sneaky Rev. Pete at it again</i>, dated 15/8/07</li> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Media Release – <i>An Appeal for Noosa</i>, dated 9/8/07</li> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Media Release – <i>Noosa is watching Beattie</i>, dated 3/8/07</li> <li>▪ Media Release – <i>Elmes has requested Plebiscite for Noosa: the fight against forced council mergers continues</i>, dated 9/8/07</li> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Media Release – <i>Beattie's Ministers Wrong Again</i>, dated 3/8/07</li> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Media Release – <i>Beattie's Minister Makes Clandestine Visit to Noosa</i>, dated 10/7/07</li> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Media Release – <i>The Sunshine Coast – is it Paradise Lose?</i>, undated</li> <li>▪ Media Release – <i>Misfire for Labor's Propoganda</i> [sic], dated 18/6/07</li> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Media Release – <i>Elmes Hand Delivers Noosa Electorate Submission</i>, dated 21/5/07</li> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Media Release – <i>Beattie Misleads Noosa</i>, dated 22/5/07</li> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Media Release – <i>Tourism Minister not in the real world</i>, undated</li> <li>▪ Queensland Coalition/Howard Hobbs – Media Release – <i>Coalition to give councils de-amalgamation option</i>, dated 29/8/07</li> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Media Release – <i>Elmes Demands Vote on Noosa Amalgamation</i>, dated 19/4/07</li> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Letter to the Editor, Coolum and North Shore Advertiser, dated 13 July 2007</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>1</li> <li>2</li> <li>1</li> <li>2</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Amalgamation Debate Speech, Local Government Reform, Hansard, Qld Parliament, 7/8/07</li> </ul>	2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Question Without Notice, Local Government Reform, Hansard, Qld Parliament, 7/8/07</li> </ul>	2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Amalgamation Adjournment Debate Speech, Hansard, Qld Parliament, 9/8/07</li> </ul>	4
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Question Without Notice, Local Government Reform, Hansard, Qld Parliament, 8/6/07</li> </ul>	2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Questions Without Notice, Extract from Hansard, Qld Parliament, 22/5/07</li> </ul>	2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Glen Elmes –Adjournment Debate Speech, Extract from Hansard, Qld Parliament, 23/5/07</li> </ul>	2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Glen Elmes – Question Without Notice, Local Government and Other Legislation – Councils Amalgamation Reform, Hansard, Qld Parliament, 18/4/07</li> </ul>	1
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Glen Elmes –Local Government and Other Legislation – Councils Amalgamation Reform, Extract from Hansard, Qld Parliament, 19/4/07</li> </ul>	2



## ELMES HAILS FEDERAL ENQUIRY

Glen Elmes, Member for Noosa, has continued his crusade against the Beattie Labor Government's regime of undemocratic local government reforms by submitting a 9-page document to the Senate Committee hearings due to take place in Noosa.

"Support for Noosa's fight against forced amalgamation has now come from the Commonwealth Government in the form of the *Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Democratic Plebiscites) Bill 2007*. The Senate Committee responsible for Finance and Public Administration will be conducting hearings into the Bill throughout Queensland this week and will be in Noosa on Thursday, 30 August 2007. This is the latest opportunity in our community's ongoing campaign against Premier Beattie and his regime of forced council amalgamations" Glen Elmes said.

"I will relish the opportunity to tell the Senate inquiry that Beattie and his Labor Government have gone too far and I will explain in detail to them of the draconian measures that have been used by the State Government to silence any protest.

"I will tell the Senate and the rest of Australia that Noosa does not want to be amalgamated. I will tell them that Noosa does not need to be amalgamated.

"We need the Commonwealth Government to give us all possible support to ensure that our democratic rights are upheld. We will send Peter Beattie a message that Noosa will not be silenced.

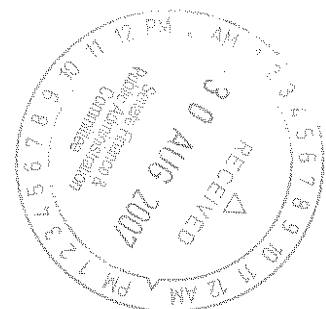
"We will not be intimidated by threats of sackings and fines and we will fight this insulting and unjust law which remains in place, despite government assurance that it will be removed, for as long as it takes to ensure that Noosa is reinstated as an independent stand-alone local authority." ENDS

**Wednesday 29 August, 2007**

**Further information: Glen Elmes MP - 07 5449 8988 or 0400 800 114**

---

59 Mary Street, PO Box 155, Noosaville Q 4566  
Ph 5449 8988 FreeCall 1800 818 396 Fax 5449 9719  
EMAIL: [noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au)  
[www.glenelmes.com](http://www.glenelmes.com)





**20 AUGUST 2007**

### **A PLEA FOR SANITY**

Following the release of data from a newspaper's online poll comes the news that 98% of Noosa residents are against the merger with Maroochy and Caloundra. Additional evidence, if any was needed, of the Shire's opinion. The Member for Noosa, Glen Elmes, said that this latest result gives even further credence to the determination by Noosa residents to maintain their own identity in a stand-alone council.

"We've had the petition of 18,747 signatures; we've had 31,000 submissions to the Local Government Reform Commission; we had between 7,000 - 10,000 Noosa Shire residents march on Parliament House and now we have this online poll as yet another indicator to the Premier.

"The Noosa Shire isn't a financial basket case, in fact it is in the top 10 of financially sound local authorities in the state. The Shire respects its environment, is socially responsible and has a community which is very proud and determined to maintain it's sustainable future" Glen Elmes said.

"The Local Government and Planning Minister, Andrew Fraser, himself said that if there were 156 councils in Queensland like Noosa there would be no need for local government reform. So, on the eve of this week's Parliamentary sessions, I would ask the Premier and the Minister to look at the facts and hear the voice of the people and to propose an amendment this week to amend the legislation and allow Noosa to continue on it's own very successful course.

"I believe that the time for the Premier to be a politician has gone and the time for him to become a statesman has arrived. I hope he is up to the challenge". **ENDS**

**Further information: Glen Elmes MP. Tel: 07 3406 7340 or 0400 800 114**

---

59 Mary Street, PO Box 155, Noosaville Q 4566  
Ph 5449 8988 FreeCall 1800 818 396 Fax 5449 9719  
EMAIL: [noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au)  
[www.glenelmes.com](http://www.glenelmes.com)



**15 AUGUST 2007**

### **SNEAKY REV. PETE AT IT AGAIN**

Press reports that quote Premier Peter Beattie as saying "I think Queensland is religion, saving Queensland is religious and we have a religious zeal and commitment to do just that" has prompted the Member for Noosa Glen Elmes to compare the Premier's statement to "something you would expect to hear from one of those over-the-top televangelists and Premier Beattie is just as credible."

"There wouldn't be a city, town or shire anywhere in the state that couldn't justifiably claim iconic status for something they have done or which already exists, and while I welcome any move to protect Noosa, just how far is this proposed legislation to be rolled out into other areas of Queensland, apart from Noosa and Port Douglas?"

"I congratulate Bob Abbot in working within, and for the betterment of, our community however any guarantees given by the Beattie Labor government about protecting Noosa through legislation has the same substance as the legislation that was overturned by the same government which guaranteed to the people of Queensland the right to vote on amalgamation" Glen Elmes said.

"If the Premier had just a shred of decency he could prove his commitment to Noosa and Port Douglas by proposing a small amendment to the legislation passed last week, to re-create a stand-alone Noosa Shire.

"History has proven that the best protectors of any community are the people that live in it and I can assure the Premier that if there is any real religious zeal around it is in the hearts and minds of the residents of Noosa and their desire to protect their way of life."  
**ENDS**

**Further information: Glen Elmes MP. Tel: 5449-8988 or 0400 800 114**

---

59 Mary Street, PO Box 155, Noosaville Q 4566  
Ph 5449 8988 FreeCall 1800 818 396 Fax 5449 9719  
EMAIL: [noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au)  
[www.glenelmes.com](http://www.glenelmes.com)



**9 AUGUST 2007**

## **AN APPEAL FOR NOOSA**

Glen Elmes, Member for Noosa will make an impassioned plea in the Parliament today during the debate on local government reform.

"I have just 20 minutes to speak on the amalgamation issue today" Glen says, "and it's my intention to make the most of each minute to state my case on behalf of every resident in the Noosa Shire to not be amalgamated and included in a Sunshine Coast Supercouncil.

"My speech will be a heartfelt request, made to the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Minister for Local Government, and perhaps more importantly, to the Labor backbenchers, calling upon their sense of common decency to listen to the Noosa message. I intend to appeal to them as long-standing and loyal members of the Labor movement and will call upon their sense of social justice.

Earlier this week there was a condolence motion in the parliament for the passing of Tom Burns, a great Queenslander, a great member of the Labor Party and a great Member of Parliament. I hope that the Labor members will reflect on his legacy, his values and on the old beliefs of the Labor Party, to show understanding and provide certainty for our future.

"I know that there is a lot more fight in Noosa yet and I refer to the work currently under way by The Friends of Noosa, private members' bills, as well as my and the Coalition's guarantee to de-amalgamate Noosa should it be the will of the people to do so - we shouldn't have to go through all this pain.

"My intention, with the best will in the world, is to appeal to the Government and the members of the Government, to leave Noosa alone. There is no justification to amalgamate Noosa, not on social grounds, not on environmental grounds and not on financial grounds. I will ask that Noosa be allowed to remain free."

**Further information: Glen Elmes MP. Tel: 3406-7340 or 0400 800 114**

---

59 Mary Street, PO Box 155, Noosaville Q 4566  
Ph 5449 8988 FreeCall 1800 818 396 Fax 5449 9719  
EMAIL: [noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au)



**3 AUGUST 2007**

## **NOOSA IS WATCHING BEATTIE**

Glen Elmes, Member for Noosa has urged residents of Noosa Shire to keep an eye on Premier Beattie when Parliament resumes next week. New technology will allow every Queenslanders the opportunity to see the farce which will be the debate on local government amalgamation.

"Beattie is silencing the voice of the people. He is making a farce of the democratic process and our Governmental systems." Elmes said.

"His belligerence is rivaled only by his arrogance in this matter.

"31,000 submissions were made to the Local Government Reform commission directly about Noosa shire, yet still Beattie refuses to allow the people to vote on whether they should be forced to surrender their local council."

But the people of Queensland have an option to keep an eye on Beattie through the internet. Anyone can log on to the website and watch the parliament debate live at <http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/view/chamber/>

"Anyone concerned about what the monster of Queensland politics is going to do to the Noosa shire should log on and watch the debate next week."

"My colleagues and I will do everything in our power to force Beattie to see reason and if he persists in forcing his undemocratic processes on the people of Queensland and Noosa, they will have the opportunity to see his face when he does it.

The Queensland Parliament's live broadcast commences each sitting day at 09.30am. – **ENDS.**

**Further information: Glen Elmes, MP 3406-7340 or 0400 800 114**

---

59 Mary Street, PO Box 155, Noosaville Q 4566  
Ph 5449 8988 FreeCall 1800 818 396 Fax 5449 9719  
EMAIL: [noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au)



**9 AUGUST 2007**

## **ELMES HAS REQUESTED PLEBISCITE FOR NOOSA**

### **The fight against forced council mergers continues**

The people of Noosa have made their message loud and clear – they do not want to amalgamate. Residents are not ready to lie down and accept Peter Beattie's widely opposed forced council mergers without a fight.

Due to overwhelming community outrage against Mr Beattie's moves to force unwanted council amalgamations on residents, the Member for Noosa, Glen Elmes has written to the Australian Electoral Commission requesting a plebiscite for the shire of Noosa.

"Laws which have been introduced into Parliament today by the Beattie Government would instantly dismiss the local council if they made this request themselves," Mr Elmes said.

"Residents and councils can not be shut down like this."

**Further information: Glen Elmes MP. Tel: 3406-7340 or 0400 800 114**

---

59 Mary Street, PO Box 155, Noosaville Q 4566  
Ph 5449 8988 FreeCall 1800 818 396 Fax 5449 9719  
EMAIL: [noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au)  
[www.glenelmes.com](http://www.glenelmes.com)





3 August 2007

## BEATTIE'S MINISTERS WRONG AGAIN

Member for Noosa, Glen Elmes says "It is obvious that a new campaign is under way by some sections of the Beattie Labor Ministry to discredit Noosa's continuing struggle to remain a stand-alone local government authority.

Recent media releases from the Minister of Tourism, Margaret Keech and Local Government and Planning Minister Andrew Fraser, claim that the Noosa community has nothing to worry about and, in the case of Andrew Fraser, who says in his release that "I guarantee that the unique characteristics of Noosa and Port Douglas can and will be protected."

Glen Elmes commented that "if Andrew Fraser gave a guarantee that the sun would rise in the east tomorrow morning, I would know to immediately seek expert opinions on the claim from sources well outside Labor Government circles.

"Andrew Fraser has proved that he is not up to the task of reforming Local Governments and is more intent on pursuing his own ambition in becoming Premier by trying, and failing, to become the new Labor Tough Man.

In the case of Noosa's tourism industry, I personally took a delegation of Noosa business people to meet with Margaret Keech to explain the potential losses to this industry, which is valued at more than \$900 million per year. Minister Keech knows very well that the separate and individual marketing of the Noosa icon creates enormous employment and business opportunities for the Shire. I would expect, as a senior Minister, that she would be standing up for an industry that she supposedly represents" Glen Elmes said.

"The level of deceit and deceptions practiced by the Labor Government in their dealings with Noosa's genuine concerns is breathtaking and I will be using every opportunity I have to remind the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Local Government, of the consequences of their actions when Parliament resumes on Tuesday" Glen Elmes said. **ENDS**

**Further information: Glen Elmes MP - Tel: 0400 800 114**

---

Ph 5449 8988 FreeCall 1800 818 396 Fax 5449 9719  
noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au



## **BEATTIE'S MINISTER MAKES CLANDESTINE VISIT TO NOOSA**

Tuesday, 10 July 2007

Local Government and Planning Minister, Andrew Fraser will make a secret visit to Noosa today at the invitation of the local Labor Party Branch.

"I understand that a small number of community groups have been invited to send a representative to make a short statement in front of the Minister at a closed meeting," said Member for Noosa, Glen Elmes.

"This is typical of the entire fake Local Government Reform process where the people of Queensland and in this case, the residents of Noosa, continue to be denied an opportunity to have a say on their future."

"If he and the Beattie Labor Government were genuinely interested to hear the community's concerns on forced Council amalgamation, then this would be an open public meeting where hundreds and hundreds of Noosa people could attend and have their say in the belief that he, as the Minister responsible, would accept the community's decision.

"Instead, this Minister represents a government and a party that doesn't consult and that operates covertly.

"This Minister is part of a government that wanted to close the Tewantin Fire Station, that wants to build the Traveston Crossing Dam, that wants to sell the water supply that Noosa and Sunshine Coast residents have already paid for and now threatens Noosa with the loss of its identity in an amalgamated super-council."

Mr Elmes said that a couple of years ago 18,747 Noosa residents signed in just one day an anti-amalgamation petition that was presented to State Parliament.

"31,000 or 86% of the total number of submissions received by Peter Beattie's Local Government Reform Commission came from Noosa.

"I will take my hat off to the Minister if he is here tomorrow to give his personal support to the wishes of Noosa residents.

"If he is not prepared to do that then this exercise of him coming to Noosa is about as worthwhile as the dodgy AC Nielsen Survey which cost Queensland taxpayers \$96,000.

"I will attend this meeting today and I will ask the Minister, as I have asked him in the Parliament, to give Noosa his personal support. If he won't, then this is nothing more than a continuation of Labor deceit," Mr Elmes said.

**Further information: Glen Elmes, MP 5449 8988 or 0400 800 114**

---

59 Mary Street, PO Box 155, Noosaville Q 4566  
Ph 5449 8988 FreeCall 1800 818 396 Fax 5449 9719  
noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au



## THE SUNSHINE COAST - IS IT PARADISE LOST?

The release of the 2006 census figures have sounded alarm bells for the State Member for Noosa, Glen Elmes, who claims that a 17% population growth rate, over a 5 year period, simply cannot be sustained. He is also the Parliamentary Secretary to the Shadow Minister for the Environment and Multiculturalism.

"When I first came to the Sunshine Coast in 1985, the population was approximately 94,000 and 20 years later we are well past the 250,000 mark. Everyone I speak to tells me that they don't want the Sunshine Coast to become another Gold Coast, yet in just 15 years, at the present growth rates, we will have almost reached the current Gold Coast population figure of 472,279" Glen Elmes said.

"Unchecked population growth is an issue that the whole of South East Queensland has to face, and debate. The Government's SEQ Plan still calls for 60,000 hectares of open space, bushland and farms be cleared so that 550,000 new homes can be built. This means that each year 75 square kilometers of bush and agricultural land is being converted into housing and other urban developments.

"I doubt there is anyone on the Sunshine Coast, or indeed in South East Queensland who wants to see the entire region looking like some huge, urbanised version of Los Angeles, yet most people feel that they are powerless to be able to have an effective say.

"Regardless of the outcome of council amalgamations, Sunshine Coast local authorities need to engage with their communities so that as a region we can decide at what point the 'House Full' sign should go up. Noosa has made the hard decisions, I just hope that the responsible planning, environmental protection and sustainability guidelines aren't abandoned, otherwise the lifestyle reasons which all of us came here to enjoy, will be lost.

"The Beattie Government needs to encourage new arrivals to settle more evenly throughout Queensland. This Labor Government is hopelessly behind on the provision of infrastructure and if we are not careful it really will become a case of *Paradise Lost*" Glen Elmes said.

Glen Elmes will continue to outline his views at the Sunshine Coast Community Forum being held at the Lake Kawana Community Centre on Monday 2 July, 2007, at 6pm. **ENDS**

**Further information: Glen Elmes MP - Tel: 0400 800 114**

---

Ph 5449 8988 FreeCall 1800 818 396 Fax 5449 9719  
noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au



## MISFIRE FOR LABOR'S PROPOGANDA

News that the Beattie Labor Government is engaged in a push polling exercise in a vain attempt to gather support on forced council amalgamations has come as no surprise to Member for Noosa, Glen Elmes who was asked to participate in the survey.

"I received a phone call at around 1.00pm today (Monday, 18 June) from AC Nielsen in Melbourne asking me to take part in a survey regarding the performance of local government.

"The first two-thirds of the survey related to my expectations of council and areas where local government should concentrate its efforts but then came the Goebels-like propoganda questions on topics such as financial capacity, the Local Government Reform Commission, better services through amalgamation, etc," Glen Elmes said.

"The time to do this research was as a part of the Size Shape and Sustainability exercise that was in place prior to the dictatorial Beattie Government overriding the wishes of council's and local residents.

Mr Elmes said that apart from the questions being heavily weighted to give the Government the response it wants, the further deception lies in the fact that this research should be bought and paid for by the Labor Party, not the Queensland taxpayer.

"I want the Minister for Local Government to verify that this is, in fact, the case." Mr Elmes said.

"Peter Beattie and Andrew Fraser have been caught out and I have written to the Minister for Local Government & Planning asking him to provide me with the cost of the survey and who paid for it.

"I also want him to supply to me as a participant in the survey all of the raw information gathered so that the people of Queensland get to see the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth – just for a change." ENDS

Monday, 18 June 2007

**Further information: Glen Elmes, MP 5449 8988**

---

59 Mary Street, PO Box 155, Noosaville Q 4566  
Ph 5449 8988 FreeCall 1800 818 396 Fax 5449 9719  
noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au



## **ELMES HAND DELIVERS NOOSA ELECTORATE SUBMISSION**

Member for Noosa Glen Elmes today personally delivered his submission, on behalf of the Noosa Electorate, to the Local Government Reform Commission, the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Local Government, Planning & Sport, at their offices in Brisbane, well ahead of the deadline on Friday 25 May. The submission includes all the emails, messages and letters received to date by Glen Elmes since the announcement on Local Government reforms was made on Tuesday, April 17, 2007.

"I set up an online opinion poll on the homepage of my website to offer residents 3 different options and from the hundreds of votes cast, it is very clear to see that the overwhelming majority declared their preference that Noosa remain as is," Glen Elmes said. "Almost 92% of people who responded clearly said that they wanted to maintain Noosa's unique lifestyle and it's high conservation values. It is also evident from all these responses that people want to have a say, not just through petitions and submissions, but at the ballot box."

Glen Elmes went on to say that there may well be a case for some realignment of the Shire boundaries and added "I totally support Noosa Council's position of including the communities of Eumundi, Doonan, Verrierdale, Weyba Downs and Peregian Springs in their submission to the Reform Commission.

"The Beattie Government's arrogant and undemocratic approach to reform of Local Government highlights just how out of touch they are. Even if the Size, Shape and Sustainability process was taking too long, it should have been allowed to be completed. This would have allowed for voluntary, inter-council agreements to achieve reform and cost savings, as well as ensuring the democratic rights of residents and ratepayers to decide on the future of their local councils." **ENDS**

**MONDAY 21 MAY 2007**

**Further information: Glen Elmes, MP 3406-7340 or 0400 800 114**

---

59 Mary Street, PO Box 155, Noosaville Q 4566  
Ph 5449 8988 FreeCall 1800 818 396 Fax 5449 9719  
EMAIL: [noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au)



## **BEATTIE MISLEADS NOOSA**

In a heated exchange during question time in Parliament today, the Premier, Peter Beattie, was caught out by the member for Noosa, Glen Elmes, in misrepresenting the contents of a letter written to Mr Beattie by "his mate" Sir Richard Branson regarding forced council amalgamations.

"It was the Premier who first raised the Branson letter and said to the Parliament that Sir Richard had congratulated him on the initiative of local government reform. But that was only the first paragraph of the letter. The rest of the document from Sir Richard Branson stated in no uncertain terms his absolute opposition to Noosa merging with any neighbouring shires" Glen Elmes said.

"In a question without notice I asked the Premier to read to the parliament the entire letter. Even though he had just quoted from it, he denied having it in his possession. It then mysteriously appeared and Peter Beattie was forced to incorporate it's contents in Hansard, which is the official record of the parliament.

Peter Beattie has attempted to misrepresent Sir Richard Branson's very high regard for Noosa and has engaged in a series of mistruths which is the hallmark of the entire Local Government reform process. This is about politics, it has nothing to do with good policy" Elmes continued.

"I intend to pursue this matter in the parliament and keep Peter Beattie accountable to the ratepayers and residents of the Noosa Shire".

**ENDS**

**TUESDAY 22 MAY 2007**

**Further information: Glen Elmes, MP 3406-7340 or 0400 800 114**

---

59 Mary Street, PO Box 155, Noosaville Q 4566  
Ph 5449 8988 FreeCall 1800 818 396 Fax 5449 9719  
EMAIL: [noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au)



## **TOURISM MINISTER NOT IN THE REAL WORLD**

Member for Noosa Glen Elmes said he hoped the members of the Local Government Reform Commission were more in touch with the many different local government areas and their communities than the Minister for Tourism is with her portfolio.

Mr Elmes said it was rather alarming that the Minister for Tourism did not recognise the significant differences between Noosa and its southern neighbours and her comparison to the Gold Coast was completely off beam.

"Noosa is a significantly different identity to the Gold Coast and a different identity even to it's neighbours Maroochy and Caloundra."

"I understand that Mrs Keech has been talking up the benefits of amalgamation saying it would kick-start the region's tourism industry by giving councils more financial clout to better market the Coast."

"If Mrs Keech was across her portfolio she would know that tourism in Noosa Shire is worth more than \$900 million per annum.

"The Noosa brand is a separate and very successful marketing campaign; Noosa doesn't need it's tourism industry kick-started!"

"If Mrs Keech had bothered to concentrate on her portfolio she would know that there is a remarkable difference between each of the Sunshine Coast shires, their tourism industry and attractions and the money each shire generates in tourism".

"But it's not just about tourism," Mr Elmes warned.

"Noosa residents know that a forced amalgamation would have a negative impact on every single aspect of community life from reduced service provision right down to employment and the viability of small business."

"Noosa Council is the largest employer in the shire".

"It has always been a progressive Council in terms of planning, development, infrastructure and most notably in regard to it's environmental integrity and it is this that sets Noosa apart from other regions."

"Financially it has been strong and stable and without undue interference I am confident it will continue to prosper and provide the type of lifestyle that Noosa residents came here for."

Mr Elmes said that in 2005 then Minister for Local Government & Planning, Desley Boyle applauded Local Government when it voted to look at boundary changes, amalgamations, regional arrangements and cost sharing setting aside \$25 million to allow Councils to explore amalgamation, joint delivery of Local Government services or regional arrangements.

"The Size Shape and Sustainability study has been king-hit and the democratic process thwarted by a government drunk with power," said Mr Elmes.

**ENDS**

**Further information: Glen Elmes, MP 5449 8988**

---

59 Mary Street, PO Box 155, Noosaville Q 4566  
Ph 5449 8988 FreeCall 1800 818 396 Fax 5449 9719  
[noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au)



# QUEENSLAND COALITION

MEDIA RELEASE

[www.qldcoalition.qld.au](http://www.qldcoalition.qld.au)

29 August 2007

Howard Hobbs MP  
Shadow Minister for Local Government, Planning and Sport  
Member for Warrego

## **Coalition to give councils de-amalgamation option**

The Queensland Coalition will continue to fight Labor's forced council amalgamations and when elected to Government will give communities the opportunity to de-amalgamate if they wish, Shadow Local Government Minister Howard Hobbs said today.

Mr Hobbs will make the vow during his speech to the Local Government Association of Queensland's annual conference on the Gold Coast today.

Mr Hobbs said forced council amalgamations had paralysed most local governments since April and history would record 2007 as the year local was taken out of local government.

"The Beattie Labor Government's forced council amalgamations are a purely political decision with their deceitful arguments about councils going broke being debunked by various independent reports and analyses," he said.

"An analysis by respected international administrators and receivers McGrath Nicol found even the so-called 'weak' councils were unlikely to become insolvent within the near future and had financial ratings higher than the reported results for some of Australia's listed companies on the stock exchange.

"In addition, Morgan Consulting found factors such as efficiency, scale, cost reductions and elimination of duplication were often overemphasised and not properly balanced with factors such as the attachment people have to place and community and their concept of local democracy and representation."

Mr Hobbs said the Queensland Coalition would continue to fight forced council amalgamations and work to ensure communities were not worse off under Labor's plans. He also outlined the alternative under a Queensland Coalition Government.

"A Queensland Coalition Government would give communities affected by forced mergers the opportunity to de-amalgamate if residents had already stated their objection through a petition or poll," he said.

"Amalgamations may be right for some councils and not right for others, but at the end of the day, the decisions of local communities should be accepted, not overridden by a dictatorial State Government.

"Any State Government that goes so far as to make criminals out of elected representatives who are prepared to exercise their legislative and democratic right to have a say is not fit to govern."

**Media Contact - Howard Hobbs 0428 152 856 or Ann Leahy 0427 741 154**



## **ELMES DEMANDS VOTE ON NOOSA AMALGAMATION**

**April 19, 2007**

---

Member for Noosa, Glen Elmes, yesterday asked a question, without notice, of the Minister for Local Government, Andrew Fraser, on the issue of the proposed amalgamation of Councils and the effect it would have on the Noosa electorate.

"My question was to ask the Minister why Noosa residents are not to be given an opportunity to determine, via a plebiscite, whether or not they wish to be part of a larger regional local authority. "This issue", he went on to say "needed to be raised and I wanted to achieve a guarantee for the Noosa community that they would be able to have their say at the ballot box"

"I want to reiterate some of my comments from my Maiden Speech to the Parliament last year and say that, to my knowledge there is not a single person in the Noosa Shire who is in favour of some kind of Sunshine Coast supercouncil or any proposed amalgamation. Noosa has developed its own way. It is unique, it is sustainable and this is the way it's residents have chosen to live.

"Noosa also has a particular and distinctive identity as a tourism destination which is quite different to that of the Gold Coast and unique even amongst it's peers on the Sunshine Coast. The value of tourism to the iconic Hastings Street is over \$600m and it will be a brave Queensland Premier who is game enough to mess with this."

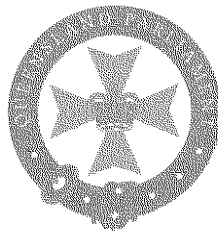
Mr Elmes continued by saying that he is also frustrated and disappointed with the Reform Commission which has been appointed to oversee this process. "It shows that the Beattie government continues to ride roughshod over Queensland communities and their wishes, seemingly without concern".

In conclusion Mr Elmes added that "I would like to reassure the Noosa community that the thinking members of the Queensland Parliament will continue to fight this unholy attack on our way of life." ENDS

**Further information: Glen Elmes MP - 3406-7340 or 0400 800 114**

---

59 Mary Street, PO Box 155, Noosaville Q 4566  
Ph 5449 8988 FreeCall 1800 818 396 Fax 5449 9719  
[noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:noosa@parliament.qld.gov.au)



13 July 2007

The Editor  
Coolum & North Shore Advertiser  
ccooluma@bigpond.net.au

**Glen Elmes, MP**  
Member for Noosa

Parliamentary Secretary  
to the Shadow Minister for  
Environment and  
Multiculturalism

Member of the  
Parliamentary  
Travelsafe Committee

Dear Sir

I refer to the meeting organised by the Noosa branch of the ALP on Tuesday 10 July where Minister for Local Government & Planning, Andrew Fraser attended, purportedly to listen to the views of about 20 selected community members to hear first-hand their opposition to his government's plan to force amalgamation of a number of Councils.

Coolum Residents Association Vice-President Bob Walpole has every right to believe that Coolum was snubbed when denied an invitation, particularly as representatives from Eumundi, Doonan and Verrierdale were invited to attend.

For the Labor Spokesman for Noosa to say that his party did *not want to confuse the Minister* by including the CRA is alarming to say the very least. Just how well does the Minister know his portfolio? Not very, by all accounts.

It beggars belief why the Minister would come to Noosa when he has said over and over and over again that he has no role to play in the decision making process. It also makes a nonsense of the whole exercise to allow just 20 minutes of his time to listen to the views of those representatives.

Just as there was insufficient time allocated to this meeting, there has been insufficient time allocated to this entire ridiculous process.

You cannot properly review the boundaries of 157 local authorities in Queensland in the space of three months. If the Local Government Reform Commission has been charged with the responsibility of reviewing and making recommendations on the boundary changes, the Commission should have been given an appropriate timeframe in which to do their work in a proper and cohesive manner.

The Premier continues his spiel that the reason he is doing this is because the local government boundaries have not been changed for over 100 years. That being the case, how is it possible to change something so entrenched in such a short space of time, unless of course you have already determined the outcome.

Legislation introduced by the Borbidge Coalition Government gave local communities the choice to decide by referendum whether Councils should amalgamate:

*"State Government should maintain the current, independent system whereby reviews of Local Governments' external boundaries are conducted by the Local Government and the Electoral Boundaries Review Commission.*

*Where the Local Governments initiate and agree on these boundary changes, these should be implemented without interference from the State Government.*

*A public inquiry should be held prior to any boundary change unless the agreement of all Local Governments involved in the changes is obtained.*

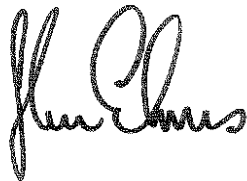
*Where there is a proposal to create or abolish a Local Government, or area, or to amalgamate Local Government areas or initiate major boundary changes, a referendum of the people affected must be held.*

*These changes shall not take place if the majority of electors in either Council are opposed to such amalgamation or a major boundary change."*

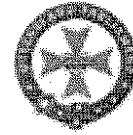
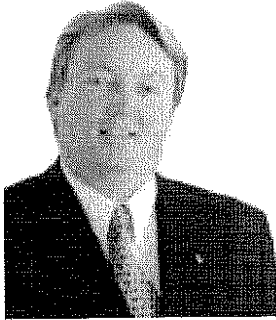
The Beattie Labor Government has chosen to throw democracy out the window and override this policy, treating the rights of Queenslanders with contempt.

Once the Review is complete and the recommendations are put forward, the residents of Coolum should be given the opportunity to exercise their right at the ballot box to decide on the future of their local authority. Nothing else is acceptable.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glen Elmes', written in a cursive style.

**GLEN ELMES MP**  
Member for Noosa



**Amalgamation Debate Speech  
GLEN ELMES**

**MEMBER FOR NOOSA**

**Hansard, 7 August 2007**

---

**Local Government Reform**

**Mr ELMES (Noosa--Lib) (3.02 pm):** I stand here today and speak on behalf of about 50,000 people in the Noosa shire. All of us--every single one of us--feels the way a person would if someone broke into their home one night and started to destroy the things that they felt were of value and that they had built up during their life. That is how my community feels.

**Mr Hoolihan** interjected.

**Mr ELMES:** The member for Keppel is showing that he is not quite the decent human being I would have thought he would have been. He has spent enough time in regional Queensland to have some understanding.

**Mr HOOLIHAN:** I rise to a point of order. I find those remarks objectionable and I ask that they be withdrawn.

**Mr ELMES:** I withdraw, Mr Speaker. The mayor of Noosa and I led a march in Brisbane last Friday. About 15,000 people took part in that march. When we got outside the gates of Parliament House I turned around and looked down George Street and all I could see were green and blue balloons going as far as the eye could see all the way back to South Bank. All of these people had come to Brisbane to demonstrate their commitment to their town. With them were people from Aramac, Isisford, Ilfracombe, Redcliffe, from the Pine Rivers shire and from shires and communities across Queensland, all taking a last opportunity to implore the members of the Queensland parliament to please do something to protect their homes and give them an undertaking that they can have back the right to vote at a referendum and to decide their own future. That is what this legislation has taken away; it has taken away the right to vote. The government is about to take away the right to debate and for some communities the government is taking away the ability for those people and those communities to survive.

I have correspondence that has been sent from people in my community to Kevin Rudd and I would like to read a couple of quotes from the letters he is sending back. In those letters he states--

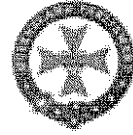
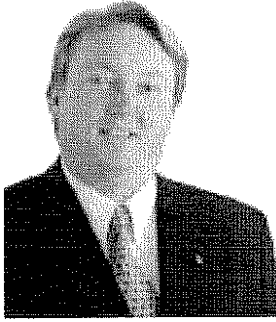
We do not support forced amalgamations of local councils without due consideration of alternate means to achieve efficiency improvements and best practice in local governments. I have indicated my position against the current forced amalgamation proposal and have asked the Queensland Premier to review his council amalgamation proposal to include consideration of non-amalgamation options for sustainability and reform of local government in Queensland.

This morning in this place there was a condolence motion for Tom Burns, a great Queensland, a great member of the Labor Party and a great member of parliament. My grandfather, as I mentioned in my maiden speech when I came into this place, was also a member of the Labor movement. I would like those members who are listening to me today, particularly on the other side, to go back in their history books. I would like them to think about the roots and beliefs of the Labor Party. I would like them to think about those people in Queensland who are looking to this government to lead, to show them some understanding and provide them with some certainty for the future. If any member on that side has any intestinal fortitude, when the time comes for this vote to be taken they will join the

coalition and vote to overturn this legislation and make sure that we provide some certainty for Queenslanders.

The Noosa shire has shown its position over and over again--it showed it with the march of 15,000 people, it showed it with the 31,000 submissions it sent to the Local Government Reform Commission and it showed it a couple of years ago in a petition against forced council amalgamations which was signed by 18,747 people in one day. That came about because Terry Mackenroth, one of the commissioners, made a speech to--guess who?--the Property Council. He told the Property Council that we should amalgamate the three local councils on the Sunshine Coast. There is an opportunity here for some leadership, there is an opportunity here for some soul, and I really hope, on behalf of the coalition but more particularly on behalf of all Queenslanders, that there are some people opposite who will do the right thing when the vote is taken

---



Question Without Notice  
GLEN ELMES

MEMBER FOR NOOSA

Hansard, 7 August 2007

---

Local Government Reform

**Mr ELMES:** My question without notice is to the minister for local government and planning. Noosa, as the minister knows, has been rated in the top 10 financially secure councils in Queensland. It is also the first local authority in Australia to be recognised as a model sustainable community. When the minister made his secret visit to Noosa he said that if there were 156 councils in Queensland like Noosa there would be no need for local government reform. Why has the minister gutted the mums and dads and kids of Noosa and imposed amalgamation on us?

**Mr FRASER:** Mr Speaker--

**Mr Elmes** interjected.

**Mr FRASER:** I thank the member for Noosa for his question. I would like to go back to one of the premises of his question which is that I somehow conducted a secret meeting in Noosa some weeks ago.

**Mr Elmes** interjected.

**Mr FRASER:** The reality is that it was so secret that the media was there for the entire time that I was talking with community groups from across Noosa.

**Mr Elmes** interjected.

**Mr FRASER:** More to the point, it was so secret--

**Mr Elmes** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Noosa, you have asked the question and you have interjected four times in the last 30 seconds. Let the minister answer the question.

**Mr FRASER:** So secret was this meeting that the member for Noosa was huffing and puffing and running around outside the meeting for the whole time. As if anyone would call the meeting that I conducted with the community groups across Noosa a secret meeting. It was in no way a secret meeting. It was an undertaking I gave to go and talk with community representatives across Noosa. As the record of that meeting will show from the media that was present, I do not think one could describe it as in anyway a government fan club at that meeting.

The point of the matter is this. The independent Local Government Reform Commission considered all the submissions provided to it. As an independent commission it made a recommendation that it believes is the best result for the people of the Sunshine Coast as a whole, as a region, as a significant part of the state which is to join those councils to provide for the sort of clout that is needed on the Sunshine Coast for it to be an advocate not only to the state government and private enterprise but also to the federal government.

In the end, the point of the matter is this. At a state and federal level independent commissions set the boundaries and we should all accept the umpire's decision. In this regard, the independent Local Government Reform Commission has provided recommendations. As we have said as a government, this does not come without its difficulties for us. This does not come without its political difficulties for the government. But we have had the courage to stand by the process we set up at the start and that is accept the umpire's decision and look to the future.

**Mr Elmes** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Noosa, you are interjecting on the basis that you do not want to be in the chamber. If you do want to be in the chamber--

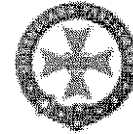
**Mr Seenev** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Excuse me, I have the floor here not you, Leader of the Opposition. I am saying to you that you have asked the minister a question so let the minister answer the question. You will have time to debate the bill that will eventually be before the parliament. I call the minister for local government and planning.

**Mr FRASER:** The independent commission has made its recommendations. It is incumbent upon all of us to look to the future and do not what is easy but what is right. That is what this government has resolved to do. I say to the member for Noosa and the other people in the Liberal Party: if the recommendation of the Local Government Reform Commission in relation to the Sunshine Coast is so abhorrent why does the member for Kawana want to leave this place and run as the mayor?

---





**Amalgamation Adjournment Debate Speech  
GLEN ELMES**

**MEMBER FOR NOOSA**

**Hansard, 9 August 2007**

**Mr ELMES (Noosa--Lib) (5.53 pm):** I rise to speak against the Local Government Reform Implementation Bill 2007. This bill represents tyranny in its operation and the destruction of Noosa in its performance. What is worse is that the handling of this bill and the entire process of amalgamations represents a pattern of deceit by the Premier and this government. I say tyranny because despite overwhelming opposition from within Noosa from citizens and businesses, opposition from both sides of politics, opposition from all manner of high places, Mr Beattie and his minister refuse to see reason. They refuse to listen to the people of Noosa. They are hell-bent on imposing their amalgamations through any means necessary.

I say a pattern of deceit because we have had a number of events where the minister for local government specifically set out to gag the people of Noosa and all Queenslanders over this issue, starting with the Local Government and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2006 which took away the requirement of a vote before amending any council boundaries to the Local Government Reform Implementation Bill 2007 which takes away any assistance people may receive from the Australian Electoral Commission to the leaked email from the deputy executive director of the Department of Emergency Services dictating that SES volunteers were banned from protesting outside this place on Friday of last week.

As if this pattern of deceit is not enough, the minister today threatened that any council that calls a poll on the amalgamations would be immediately dismissed without notice and would have administrators appointed. This pattern of deceit flows right through this government and taints all of its actions and brings this parliament into dishonour.

The removal of the Noosa Shire Council will result in the destruction of all we hold dear. The Noosa council has stood in the way of developers' bulldozers and it has kept our home a shining example for the rest of the state and for the rest of the country. By taking away our council and replacing it with one charged to handle Caloundra, Maroochy and Noosa this government puts in jeopardy the beauty and environmental jewel of Noosa.

Belatedly the Premier has recognised that Noosa is special and has suggested special legislation to protect Noosa and Port Douglas as iconic locations. But what standing does this legislation have to protect us when only a few short weeks ago another piece of his legislation took away our right to vote. So why is Noosa worth special consideration here? Compared to the legacy of the Noosa area and the efforts that have been expended to preserve the environment and keep Noosa special, the legacy of this Beattie government stands in stark contrast. The legacy of this government is sickening. Three former Beattie government ministers are now in jail or under investigation.

But now the Beattie government has reached a new low. Not only is it prepared to sully its own representation but it has directly attacked Queenslanders by refusing them access to democracy. We see here that the Beattie government is ruling Queensland without regard for the impact on Queenslanders. The Beattie government was not even listening when thousands upon thousands of Queenslanders from across the state made their way to this place to protest against this bill. Yet they are not given the respect of a decent response from the Premier or his minister. We all heard him today label giving a vote to people affected by this bill pointless. Then his minister followed up by introducing amendments which take away the only form of assistance which has been given to ordinary Queenslanders by the federal government.

The doctrine of democracy is a lofty concept and one which is often claimed by members in this place when speaking against government actions. But here we see that I am not just talking about hot air and rhetoric. The actions of this government are deliberately designed to restrict the voice of the people. This government is openly violating the main concept of democracy which gives people a voice.

For the purposes of the record I would like to discuss who will be supporting this bill today and the violation of the democratic process. We in this place heard earlier this week that the Deputy Premier does not care about this bill and its affect on rural Queenslanders because her house is in Brisbane and will not be affected. So following on from her remarks I would like to record who in the government will not be affected and who, similar to the Deputy Premier, simply does not care. Let me read the roll of dishonour to members. It is: Mount Ommaney, Mrs Attwood; Aspley, Ms Barry; Brisbane Central, the Premier; Chatsworth, Mr Bombolas; Capalaba, Mr Choi; Broadwater, Ms Croft; Sandgate, Ms Darling; Redlands, Mr English; Greenslopes, Mr Fenlon; Yeerongpilly, Mr Finn; Mount Coot-tha, Mr Fraser, the minister; Gaven, Mr Gray; Kallangur, Mr Hayward; Stafford, Mr Hinchliffe; Albert, Ms Keech; Southport, Mr Lawlor; Indooroopilly, Mr Lee; Lytton, Mr Lucas; Logan, Mr Mickel; Bundamba, Mrs Miller; Waterford, Mr Moorhead; Inala, Ms Palaszczuk; Bulimba, Mr Purcell; Mansfield, Mr Reeves; Mudgeeraba, Mrs Reilly; Nudgee, Mr Roberts; Stretton, Mr Robertson; Woodridge, Mrs Scott; Burleigh, Mrs Smith; Mount Gravatt, Ms Spence; Springwood, Ms Stone; Algester, Ms Struthers; Pumicestone, Mrs Sullivan; Redcliffe, Ms van Litsenburg; Cleveland, Mr Weightman; Murrumba, Mr Wells; and Ferny Grove, Mr Wilson.

That is the list of members who will make sure that the people of Queensland get this dishonest piece of legislation before this parliament rises tonight. All of these people simply do not and will not care about rural Queensland. Their homes and their way of life are not going to be affected by these amalgamations, so they simply do not care. I put the challenge to all members who I have just mentioned: prove me wrong if you will and cross the floor--

**Ms BARRY:** I rise to a point of order. The member is misleading the House. Even though I am the member for Aspley, I live in the Pine Rivers shire within my electorate and it will be affected by these amalgamations. He is misleading the House.

**Mr ELMES:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I look forward to the member voting with the coalition when the time comes.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms van Litsenburg):** There is no point of order.

**Mr ELMES:** Of course not.

**Mr Springborg:** Good try though.

**Mr ELMES:** It was a good try. To prove me wrong, I invite the member to cross the floor when the vote takes place later on. If these people do not cross the floor they are showing their disrespect to the mums and dads, the kids and the grandparents of regional Queensland and it is following on from the deceit of the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the minister for local government. My message to all of the members I mentioned is that history will judge them. History will record that a vote was taken today and that the elected representatives of Queensland chose not to care about who would suffer from their decision. History will record a pattern of deceit shown by the Beattie government today. When history looks back, I want people to remember that Labor was callous, not caring. It was happy to continue its contempt of rural Queensland. Let history record those words because they aptly describe this government's treatment of all Queenslanders displayed most flagrantly in this situation.

But Mr Beattie is not just disregarding the people of Noosa and all Queenslanders; he is disregarding support from all sides of politics. Some 31,000 submissions to the Local Government Reform Commission rejected amalgamation of the Noosa shire. Thousands upon thousands protested here in Brisbane just one week ago tomorrow. He is also disregarding the advice of federal leaders of both political parties. In fact, it has taken the Prime Minister to intervene in order to bring about some semblance of democracy to this government. But Mr Rudd is also on the record condemning this bill and condemning Mr Beattie's actions to prevent the people's voice from being heard. Premier Beattie's petulance in this situation is completely hysterical and he is refusing to listen to Noosa or to give the

people of Noosa a chance to voice their opposition. This is a government bent on tyranny and a government drunk on power.

Why does the Premier not listen to his party's federal leader and consult the community properly? I table reports of some of the other objections to this amalgamation of the Noosa shire council--namely, from the local ALP branch in Noosa, an email from Kevin Rudd and support from Sir Richard Branson and Bob Ansett against amalgamation.

Tabled paper: Copies of various media articles and other documents regarding the Noosa Shire Council and proposed amalgamations of local authorities.  
Clearly support for Noosa against this amalgamation comes from both sides of politics and the Premier and his cabinet are alone on this issue. Yet he continues in his petulance. His childlike displays in this place show that he is not acting rationally in pursuing this issue against Noosa.

I draw the House's attention to comments made by the minister for local government recently. On 7 August Minister Fraser said with respect to amalgamation of the Noosa shire that the Local Government Reform Commission made a recommendation that it believes is the best result for the people of the Sunshine Coast as a whole as a region. Clearly, Minister Fraser is not considering what impact amalgamation will have on the people of Noosa; he is thinking about how the developing of Noosa will benefit the rest of the Sunshine Coast. Minister Fraser also said on that day that the people of Noosa should accept their fate. He said specifically, 'We should all accept the umpire's decision,' as if the Local Government Reform Commission was an independent umpire when one of the commissioners is a paid director of a developer. While the commission was set up to look independent, it was clearly stacked in a particular direction. On 5 June 2007 Minister Fraser said in this place that he could not trust local government councils to agree on amalgamation. He said that the only way to achieve what he wanted was to impose it upon Queensland because he could not trust Queenslanders to decide for themselves. Such is the paternalism of this minister, and aren't we lucky to be in his care!

The Beattie government has few friends on this issue, with no support not even from its party mates in Noosa or federally. So why is it proceeding with this? The reasons behind this process are unclear. We know what the official line is from the government, but Noosa does not fit into that definition. So why would the government proceed to force amalgamation on Noosa? The official line given by the minister is that the local councils are financially weak and will be unable to continue to operate without assistance. However, this reasoning from the minister stands in stark contrast to reality. Noosa, according to the minister's own web site, is listed as follows--

*Noosa Shire Council*

*Your council is financially STRONG.*

*A local government with high capacity to meet its financial commitments in the short, medium and long term. It is likely to be able to manage major unforeseen financial shocks and any adverse changes in its business and in general economic conditions with only minor revenue or expense adjustments. Its capacity to manage core business risks is strong.*

*This assessment is part of the financial sustainability review conducted by the Queensland Treasury Corporation.*

*As at 18 May 2007, the QTC had completed an assessment of 105 Queensland councils against a 10-year financial sustainability forecast.*

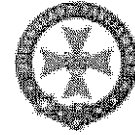
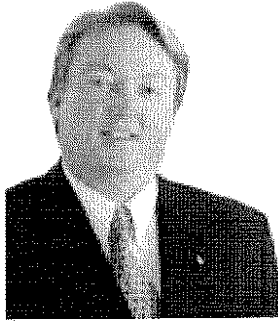
These are the words from the minister's own web site about Noosa. It beggars belief that if this government's own rationale behind amalgamations does not apply to Noosa, why then would it proceed? Perhaps it is because the Premier and his minister want to see Noosa developed. We know that he appointed his mate Terry Mackenroth to the Local Government Reform Commission to vote on whether Noosa should be developed and we know that Mr Mackenroth is a paid director of Devine Ltd, one of Queensland's biggest property developers. We should also remember that it was Terry Mackenroth who started the whole Sunshine Coast amalgamation debate when he spoke in favour of it at a Property Council lunch in Mooloolaba just a couple of years ago. Such a person on the commission hardly makes it an independent umpire despite what the minister may like us to believe.

The Deputy Premier said amalgamations were necessary to give councils clout to deal with mining companies and other multinational corporations. But again this does not apply to Noosa because the council and the community itself have stood up to developers and other environmental vandals for more than a generation. It is the people of Noosa who are the insurance policy of our way of life and not this minister and his phoney legislation. They are removing the opportunity for the people of Noosa and the people of regional towns and shires across our state to vote on whether they want this amalgamation. This government is exhibiting all the hallmarks of history's tyrannical rulers. The stink of deceit can be smelt in every corner of Queensland today. I urge the Labor members opposite to see what their leaders are up to. Give the people of Queensland the opportunity to voluntarily accept amalgamation. Do not force it down their throat! Do not kill off some of our smaller regional towns and shires!

I cannot understand why this government refuses to see reason in this situation. I hope that government members in this place will see reason today. If they do not, let the record show that today in this place democracy was put to death. Let the record show that the Beattie government maintains its pattern of deceit to hoodwink the people of Noosa and the people of Queensland. Let the record show that Labor stands for oppression. Let it show that Labor stands for deceit. Let the record show that I and the Queensland coalition opposed amalgamation without the right of a vote. When we come back into power, we will reinstate the Noosa shire and we will give the communities across the state an option through the ballot box to re-establish their community in the way that they would wish.

I also say that it was with great relish this afternoon that I wrote to the Australian Electoral Commission formally requesting a plebiscite. The minister would be pleased to know that I did not speak to anyone at the Noosa Council. I did it off my own bat so I hope that Noosa can again be one of those places that continues the fight. Today is not the end of it. This is not the end of it; this is the start. There is another announcement that will be made tomorrow from the Friends of Noosa. There are more meetings happening tomorrow. This is going to go on and on and on all the way through to the next state election. We will make sure that the Labor Party is renowned throughout this state--from one end of it to the other--for this and remind people every day what it has done to the smaller regional towns and cities across Queensland.

---



Question Without Notice  
GLEN ELEMES

MEMBER FOR NOOSA

Hansard, Friday 8 June, 2007

### Local Government Reform

**Mr ELMES:** My question without notice is directed to the Premier. I table material from the Noosa Journal of 23 May 2007 in which a two-time state Labor candidate and current federal Labor candidate and the former Labor candidate for Noosa both support Noosa remaining as a stand-alone local council. In this, they reflect the strong opinion of over 31,000 or 86 per cent of the submissions to the Local Government Reform Commission and the strong views of the Premier's good friend Sir Richard Branson. Instead of continuing with his dictatorial approach on this issue, will the Premier now lend his public support to the community of Noosa in our desire to sustain the unique lifestyle we have developed?

*Tabled paper: Copy of article from The Noosa Journal, dated 24 May 2007, titled 'Still time to have your say'.  
Tabled paper: Copy of article from The Noosa Journal, dated 24 May 2007, titled 'Letters to the Editor'.*

**Mr BEATTIE:** I am happy to answer this question. We appointed an independent commission to examine submissions from the community. The member's community in Noosa has put in a range of submissions. I understand that there is support from sections of the tourism industry to support amalgamation. There are people who understand that a strong local government means a strong tourism industry and a strong base for ratepayers, but all the views that have been expressed by the member's local community in the submissions that were made--and I could be wrong about this, but I think the member's community made more submissions than anywhere else--will be taken into account by the independent commissioners.

The member for Noosa is a member of the Liberal Party--well, at least he is today. His former leader, Bob Quinn, is represented as one of the commissioners. He is there because he was a member of EARC, which was one of the bodies that initially looked at electoral boundaries. Why did the government put him there? Because, one, he understands politics in terms of regional communities and local government and, two, he was a member of EARC. I have no doubt at all that he will take into account the views of the people of Noosa. As the Deputy Premier said, he is also a fair and decent person.

We were strategic in this because we wanted to listen to Queenslanders. The views of the people of Noosa will be considered by all of the commissioners. To guarantee that, we have Bob Quinn, the former Liberal Party leader, there. The Leader of the Opposition asked me a question about Gayndah. To guarantee the people of Gayndah and those in the bush and the regions are listened to, Di McCauley, a former National Party local government minister, is there. When we put these things out there, none of those opposite can argue against this independent process because the former Liberal Party leader will be on it--

**Mr Elmes:** They want your support.

**Mr BEATTIE:** Please do not be rude.

**Mr Elmes** interjected.

**Mr BEATTIE:** Please do not be rude. The former Liberal Party leader will be on it, and a former National Party local government minister will be on it. You do not particularly like that because you know that she will be fair. It does not suit your current National Party agenda. That is what it is. I did not come down in the last shower; I understand the agenda. Those views will be taken into account, as will Sir Richard Branson's. His view will also be taken into account.

**Mr Elmes:** That's good. That's what they want to hear.

**Mr BEATTIE:** Please do not get excited. You are a bit red and flushed in the face now. Do not get excited. I do urge local councils to be mindful of what they are doing with their chief executive officer contracts. I made some comments in this House the other day in relation to the members for Burnett and Bundaberg and they both got their knickers in a knot. I will table two letters that I received from the mayors, which I am quite happy to do. I do not necessarily share the views expressed, but because of my openness and my goodwill to those councils--and I have spoken to the mayor of Bundaberg--I table them for the information of the House.

*Tabled paper: Letter, dated 29 May 2007, from Tim Rose, Chief Executive Officer of the Burnett Shire Council to the Premier, relating to the renewal of his employment contract.*

*Tabled paper: A letter, dated 4 June 2007, from Rob Whiddon, to Mr Fred Monk, President, South Carolina Export Consortium, relating to the proposed trade delegation to Queensland.*

*Tabled paper: A letter, dated 25 May 2007, from Cr Kay McDuff, Mayor, City of Bundaberg to Premier relating to statements in the House about the renewal of the CEO contract.*

Let me make it clear: we will end up with strong local government. We are not going to have weak local government in this state.

---

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**

*From page 19:*

**Peter Beattie:** We want strong, viable councils for the future of Queensland and that is exactly what we will do. I know that there is a lot of misinformation around. I heard some reference to a letter that Richard Branson had written to me the other day. I have Sir Richard's letter, and he writes-- *As always, I hope this note finds you very well. I understand that your Government is pursuing a program of local Government reform, including the likely amalgamation of a number of local councils. This I'm sure is being applauded by the vast majority of Queenslanders and, as a 'frequent' Queenslanders myself, well done on this initiative.* I saw some nonsense up in Noosa. I say, 'Sir Richard, you are always welcome in Queensland!'

---

*From page 28:*

**Mr ELMES:** My question without notice is to the Premier. Over the last couple of weeks I have received hundreds of emails and letters from people totally opposed to the forced amalgamation of the Noosa council. I take it from the Premier's actions and comments that he obviously does not care about what ordinary Queenslanders think, yet today he selectively quoted from a letter from businessman Richard Branson which he claimed supports forced amalgamations. Will the Premier table this letter that he says supports his position or, better still, could he read out the letter in full to the House right now?

**Mr BEATTIE:** I thought the honourable member's colleague sitting next to him, Steve Dickson, offered to run for the mayor of the amalgamated shire. So those two should have a bit of a chat. He has publicly said that he is going to run for the amalgamated shire. He should make up his mind. The member should be a bit careful. He should talk to the 'mayor' next to him. I want to know if he is going to support him as the mayoral candidate? Frankly, there is an opportunity.

**Mr Elmes:** Just read the letter.

**Mr BEATTIE:** Please do not point. That is very rude. Good heavens! His finger will go off and he will look silly. If he is considering a career in local government he will have to leave us, and that will be a sad moment but not for long. Those guys cannot work out what their position is. Was the member talking about the Sir Richard Branson letter?

**Mr Elmes:** Absolutely.

**Mr BEATTIE:** I have seen the Sir Richard Branson letter reported. All I have done is give balance to the other side of what he said in the letter and I make no apology for that. I have had enough reporting of the other side of it. Let us move on.

**Mr ELMES:** I rise to a point of order. I asked a direct question and I am asking the Premier to give a direct answer.

**Mr SPEAKER:** There is no point of order.

**Mr BEATTIE:** He will get a direct answer all right. He will get a little bit more before I am finished.

**Mr HOBBS:** I rise to a point of order. I move-- That the Premier table the letter.

**Mr BEATTIE:** I do not have it with me. It is gone.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Warrego has moved a motion and the Premier has informed me that he does not have the letter.

**Mr BEATTIE:** I seek leave to have the letter incorporated in Hansard . Leave granted.

18 May 2007  
The Right Honourable Peter Beattie  
The Premier of Queensland and Minister for Trade  
PO Box 15185  
Brisbane City East Qld 4001

Dear Premier,

**SUBMISSION ON NOOSA COUNCIL LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA**

*As always, I hope this note finds you very well.*

*I understand that your Government is pursuing a program of local Government reform, including the likely amalgamation of a number of local councils. This I'm sure is being applauded by the vast majority of Queenslanders and as a 'frequent' Queenslander myself, well done on this initiative.*

*Of course I genuinely hope that the team pursuing this program consider the risks that a 'no exception' policy could have on the likes of Noosa. As you may know, I am regular visitor to Noosa Shire and also own property with Brett which I use as my Queensland base.*

*I am totally opposed to Noosa Shire being amalgamated with any neighbouring shires.*

*From my visits, I see Noosa as a distinct and iconic location that provides a unique experience to international and domestic visitors. I am strongly supportive of how Noosa has differentiated itself from other locations due to its environmental management and creation of strong brand recognition based on its unique community values. This differentiation needs to be protected at all cost.*

*I have been a strong supporter of tourism in Queensland and want to emphasise the importance of market and brand differentiation. Noosa certainly has this and clearly, it is so different from its neighbours. Any suggestion that Noosa should be amalgamated with adjoining areas should be avoided as it would dilute its special character.*

*I have recognised that the village atmosphere of Noosa has a very different look and feel to the surrounding areas. The casual non-urban approach to development is what I love and why I keep coming back.*

*I would urge the Commission and the State Government to keep Noosa as a stand-alone area, recognising the unique values that differentiate it from other regions and a key reason why it is such a sought after, invaluable and irreplaceable tourism 'jewel' for Queensland.*

*Peter, both Brett and I have been working on this, so should you wish to contact me regarding this note, please have your people come back to him in the first instance and he will track me down.*

Kind regards  
Sir Richard Branson  
Chairman Virgin Group



**Mr BEATTIE:** I am absolutely relaxed about it being incorporated in Hansard . I want every part of it read, not just the tiny bit that everyone up there leaked. I want the full letter read, which is what I have done and I am delighted about that.

Let us talk about Noosa. Let us talk about what it means for tourism. Let us talk about what has happened on the Gold Coast. Let us talk about whether Noosa is going to be better from a tourism point of view. I understand that the tourism minister is going to be meeting a little bit later on today with the member and others. I can remember speaking at some length with representatives from the Noosa area about tourism. There was some gloom and doom in the early nineties when the Gold Coast and the Albert shires were merged. Now we have the sixth largest city in Australia; a booming economy; a booming tourism industry, investment and infrastructure; and great confidence in the future. To the same degree, having four councils on the Sunshine Coast has held the region back. I want to make sure that Noosa continues to go to the world. Richard Branson, who is a good friend of mine, knows and everyone else knows that amalgamation is a good thing.

---



Glen Elmes personally delivering the Noosa Electorate Reform Commission submission on Monday 21 May, 2007

**ADJOURNMENT SPEECH - GLEN ELMES**

**Mr ELMES** (Noosa--Lib) (6.08 pm): I rise in support of the opposition's motion on this particular subject. I start by thanking the Premier for bringing to the attention of the parliament yesterday in question time the correspondence that he received from his very good mate Sir Richard Branson.

In the [hurly-burly of question time, poor old Premier Pete did not get the opportunity to expand on the details of that correspondence. For the benefit of Labor members opposite, I thought I would give the House an idea what the Premier's best mate actually thinks about the amalgamation of the Noosa shire. I will quote from the letter-- Of course I genuinely hope that the team pursuing this program consider the risks that a 'no exception' policy could have on the likes of Noosa. Here is another quote-- I am totally opposed to Noosa Shire being amalgamated with any neighbouring shires.

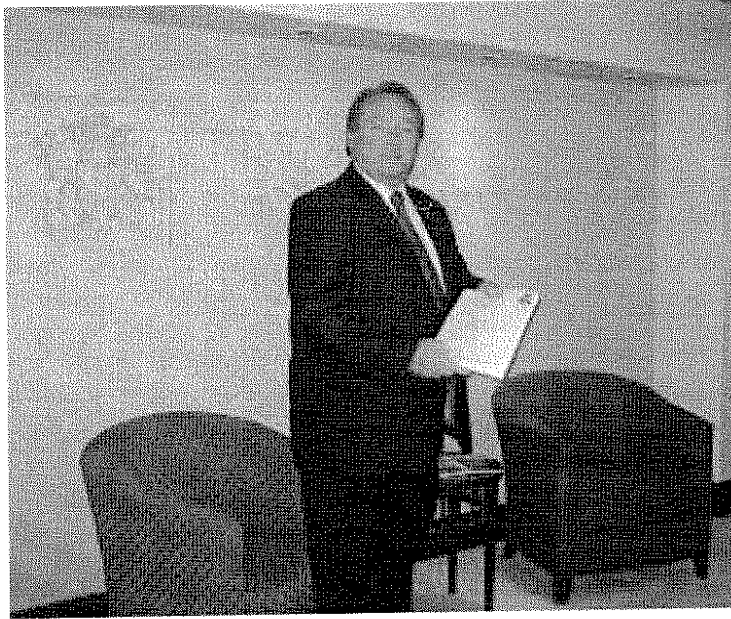
Here is another quote-- From my visits, I see Noosa as a distinct and iconic location that provides a unique experience to international and domestic visitors. I am strongly supportive of how Noosa has differentiated itself from other locations due to its environmental management and creation of strong brand recognition based on its unique community values. This differentiation needs to be protected at all cost. Here is another one-- I have been a strong supporter of tourism in Queensland and want to emphasise the importance of market and brand differentiation. Noosa certainly has this and clearly, it is so different from its neighbours. Any suggestion that Noosa should be amalgamated with adjoining areas should be avoided as it would dilute its special character. Here is another one-- I have recognised that the village atmosphere of Noosa has a very different look and feel to the surrounding areas. The casual non-urban approach to development is what I love and why I keep coming back. And here is the last one-- I would urge the Commission and the State Government to keep Noosa as a stand-alone area, recognising the unique values that differentiate it from other regions and a key reason why it is such a sought after, invaluable and irreplaceable tourism 'jewel' for Queensland.

They are all the bits and pieces that the Premier did not get the opportunity to tell us about in question time yesterday, obviously because of a lack of time. Sir Richard Branson is not the only friend of Noosa. We have people like Pat Rafter who signed on, and we have Bob Ansett who signed on. On a particular occasion like tonight being State of Origin night, I can also say that Michael O'Connor, the New South Wales State of Origin legend, signed on today as a friend of Noosa as did Willie Carne, a Queensland State of Origin legend.

But they are not the important people in this equation. I draw the parliament's attention to a petition that was presented here on 20 October 2004 that was signed by 18,747 residents of Noosa. That petition was collected on one day. If someone can tell me of a petition that raised those sorts of numbers on one day anywhere in Australia, I will be very surprised. They are the important people. On Sunday we had what we called a day of action. There were three rallies held in Noosa and I spoke to one of them. There were 3,500 people there, with a total of 8,000 people attending the rallies across the shire on Sunday. This is the people of Noosa voting with their feet and showing how supportive they are of Noosa standing alone.

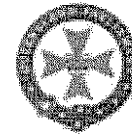
One of the things that I wanted to do when I came down to parliament this week was to make sure that, on behalf of my community, I gave my submission--and this is it here--to the people in the reform commission who needed to see it, so I decided to hand-deliver it. It was easy to find the Premier's office up on the 15th floor of the Executive Building, it was easy to find Anna Bligh's office on the 9th floor and it was easy to find the minister's office on the 18th floor of Mineral House, but when my office rang around to find where the reform commission

was last week it took us about 20 minutes before we could get an address.



Surprise, surprise, they sent us to the 18th floor of Mineral House. So I went up there and handed my copy over to the minister for local government and planning, and I then asked if I could give one to the reform commission. The person at the counter looked dumbfounded and was not sure whether she could accept the submission. So she made a total of five internal phone calls in the minister's department before she could find someone who had some association with the reform commission to come and take my submission off

me. Where are they? Is this a secret society or something? They are all hidden away. The only place where we can find anywhere written down that has some sort of address for the reform commission is PO Box 16325 in Brisbane City. Are all seven members of the commission in that box? The people who want to put their submission in person to the reform commission.....-- **Time expired.**



Speech by  
GLEN ELEMES

MEMBER FOR NOOSA

Hansard, Thursday 19 April, 2007

---

### Local Government and Other Legislation - Councils Amalgamation Reform

Question without Notice - April 18, 2007

**Mr ELMES:**

My question without notice is to the Minister for Local Government, Planning and Sport. All local authorities, but in particular the Noosa shire, have developed clear identities separate from their neighbours over generations. Why will the minister not give Noosa residents the opportunity to determine, via a plebiscite, whether or not they wish to be part of a larger regional local authority?

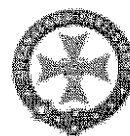
**Mr FRASER:**

I thank the member for the question because it gives me an opportunity to get to my feet this morning to talk about the local government reform package. In direct response to the member for Noosa in his request for special consideration about the Noosa shire, I think it is a relevant point to make. Members would be aware that presently the Local Government Act does contain provisions for referendums. But what does the Local Government Act say about those referendums and what did the National and Liberals have in the Local Government Act under the Borbidge government? A reserve power for the minister for local government to overturn a referendum! That is what the National Party and Liberal Party had in the Local Government Act when they were in government, and now all of a sudden they come in here and say that the referendum is a sacrosanct exercise.

The point about the issue that the member for Noosa raises is this: no-one was going to get a referendum. This voluntary process was going to lead to nought, and the reason that the government has stepped in is that there is a compelling case for reform in this circumstance. The Queensland Treasury Corporation advice provides that, as does the Australian Local Government Association. Local government says that they need it in a report commissioned by Pricewaterhouse Coopers referring to reports done by Access Economics. Everyone across-the-board said that this was needed. And what was the voluntary process going to do? What was it going to deliver? At best it was going to deliver Crows Nest and Rosalie and Goondiwindi and Waggamba. But I would not want to bet more than \$20 on either of them, because these are difficult decisions and difficult structural reform and at every point in time those councils, those individuals and those communities would of course at the last minute when this got to the pointy end have shirked back from that difficult decision.

But what we are doing here is saying that there is a compelling case. Someone needs to step in and step up, and that is what we are doing in these circumstances. In a couple of years time when councils were faced with collapse and rates were going through the roof as councils faced hitting the wall or council employees were subject to mass sackings as councils tried to sustain themselves, all of those opposite would have come in here and said, 'In 2007 this government and the minister knew that this was going to happen. Why didn't you act?' We have been confronted with the situation and government has two choices in difficult situations: confront the problem and stand up and be counted or put your head in the sand. This government is standing up and being counted. We are going to undertake this reform for the long-term benefit of the whole of Queensland, including the residents of Noosa shire.

The independent commission will make these recommendations to the government and there will be a public process where all residents from across Queensland, including Noosa, can make a submission. I encourage the member for Noosa to go out there and tell his constituents that they should make a recommendation to the independent commission, which I remind the member is being chaired by the former Electoral Commissioner and contains representation from all sides of politics. This is a reform process that will be difficult, but it is one that absolutely must be undertaken. There is no other course of action.



Speech by  
GLEN EAMES

MEMBER FOR NOOSA

Hansard, Thursday 19 April, 2007

---

### Local Government and Other Legislation - Councils Amalgamation Reform

**Mr EAMES (Noosa--Lib) (3.32 pm):** I wish it was with some degree of pleasure that I was standing here today and speaking in the debate on the Local Government and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2006. Prior to Tuesday of this week I expected to be standing here today and, in the main at least, supporting the legislation before the House. There are some very good provisions in it. The announcement on Tuesday by the minister concerning the wholesale amalgamation of local authorities across Queensland makes it impossible for either me or the coalition to support the wholesale slaughter of one level of government in Queensland. Local government delivers basic services. That is its role and its job and it has done it very well over many years. In more recent times this Labor government and Labor governments prior to this one have flick passed additional responsibilities onto councils. They are responsibilities that councils have picked up and run with and they have done exceptionally well. I have listened to everybody who has spoken in this debate.

Members have talked about their own councils, their own local authorities and their own experiences with those local authorities. It shows the diversity that exists across Queensland in all of the local authorities. They all operate differently. They all have their own identities. They all have their own set of problems. This government has turned around and is trying to put them all in one box. This is a Labor model. It all must look the same, it must feel the same, it must be the same and if they cannot do that then they destroy the whole thing and build it up again. This is sort of thing we cannot have. This is the sort of thing that the members of the coalition will fight against. Most of my Noosa electorate falls within the Noosa shire but part of it is in the Maroochy shire. Nothing more clearly demonstrates the difference between two local authorities than looking at the differences that have developed between these two local authorities.

Over a number of years the Maroochy shire has become more development orientated. There are a lot more high-rise buildings. Development in the Maroochy shire has generally been a lot more intense than is the case in the Noosa shire. In the case of Noosa, which is where I live, we made a decision many years ago--it has evolved over 25 years or more--to be more careful with our environment and we make sure that the industries that develop in their peculiar ways generate jobs in our community. We have looked at the population that we can sustain as a community. The Noosa shire introduced a population cap, which is now likely to disappear out the back door. We decided on the population cap based on things like the available land that we wanted developed and the amount of water that we had available to us to use in our community sustainability. That is what is now under threat in my part of the world.

The amalgamation rumours have been around for quite some time. When I came down for this sitting week I came armed with an adjournment speech that I wanted to make. I had a question on notice that I wanted to ask. It was all aimed at appealing to and pleading with the minister for local government not only on behalf of my community but also communities across Queensland to allow the residents and ratepayers of local authorities to have a say about this at the ballot box; to go through the Size, Shape and Sustainability process and to decide what their future was going to be. If it came to amalgamation I wanted them to be given the opportunity by this government to exercise their right at the ballot box and decide what their future was going to be. This opportunity has been taken away this week. It has gone.

In three months time we will have a group of ex-politicians and public servants make their recommendations to this parliament. Because of numbers the Labor Party government will decide the outcome and the future for Queenslanders right across this state.

**Mr Stevens:** The commissars are coming.

**Mr ELMES:** Thank you very much: the commissars are coming. The problem that I really see in the almost 24 hours that this debate has been proceeding is that on the opposition side we are talking about our life experience and we are talking about the local authorities that we live in and are a part of but the contributions from members of the Labor government are neatly compartmentalised. I doubt whether--with the exception of you, Mr Deputy Speaker Hoolihan, because you mentioned that you have travelled extensively in Queensland--anyone else on the Labor side has ventured west of the divide. If they had gone west of the divide they would understand the way these local communities operate and the degree of protection, in some cases, that they need to have. They should be shown by this minister and this government. At the time of the last federal election the amalgamation debate was around and on polling day Noosa community groups manned every polling booth in the Noosa shire and in one day collected 18,600 signatories all demanding that Noosa shire not be amalgamated--18,600 signatories in one day. My community has spoken. I do not know about other members, but my community has spoken. It does not want a bar of amalgamation. It wants to find its own way, and it wants to be left to find its own way. We need to go back and support the Size, Shape and Sustainability system.

We heard that \$25 million had been set aside for that process and only \$2 million of it had been spent. However, that \$2 million does not cover the discussions that have been going on within the councils themselves. It does not take into account the discussions that have been going on not only between council staff in the same local authority but also between council staff in different local authorities. It has been a long process. It may have been going on for too long. That may very well be the case, but it is a process that should be allowed to be completed, because not completing the process and not involving the people will create the age-old problem of judging people from the top down rather than bringing people from the bottom up. We also need to ensure that the Size, Shape and Sustainability process is well advertised. We have to do more with that. I know that the information that has been gathered so far is going to be handed on to the commissioners so at least they get a bit of a jump-start when the time comes, and I hope they find that acceptable to them and take those facts on board. One other issue that I want to mention with regard to the Noosa shire is the way our tourism industry has developed over the years. Something like \$600 million a year is generated by tourism just from the Hastings Street precinct alone. Most of our jobs come from the Hastings Street precinct and many local small businesses rely on the business that that brings. It is another great example of how it has evolved differently to the Gold Coast and differently to our neighbours in Maroochy or Caloundra. It would be a very brave Premier indeed who starts to muck around with industries of that kind not only in Noosa but right across the state. Local authorities have reduced in New South Wales from 176 to 152 and in Victoria from 210 down to 79 between 1991 and 2007. That is a great reduction, but I am here to tell members that there are still local authorities in those two states that are stressed financially, and in recent times I have read about a great many of them in Victoria that do not like one little bit the amalgamation process that was forced on them by the Kennett government.

**Mr Lawlor:** So you'd do nothing, would you?

**Mr ELMES:** I take that interjection. As state parliamentarians we are about to go through a redistribution. Federal parliamentarians go through redistributions in this state pretty well every three years. It should be no different with local government. There should be tinkering at the edges. There should be boundary realignments. Those sorts of things need to happen. That is part of the process. What we are talking about is making local authorities viable and not taking away the community of interest. If we do, we will find ourselves in a situation where we are absolutely decimating a level of government. What will happen as part of this process--because it seems pretty well set on its way--for the Beattie Labor government is that by the time this mob of commissioners has made its findings the Premier and his ministers will have less troublesome mayors and less troublesome councillors around to give them some grief in the press. I can tell the House that there are going to be tens of thousands of Queenslanders who will remember what this Labor government has done to them and their communities and they will have their revenge at the ballot box at the next state election.

---