

## COUNCIL

*Premium Produce,  
People and Promise*

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
OFFICER**  
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**ALL CORRESPONDENCE  
MUST BE ADDRESSED TO  
THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
OFFICER**

PAB:pab  
File Ref: 1/10/8

23 August, 2007

Committee Secretary  
Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee  
Department of the Senate  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
**CANBERRA ACT 2600**

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE: LEGISLATION TO ALLOW QUEENSLAND COUNCILS TO  
CONDUCT POLLS/PLEBISCITES**

I thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission in relation to the proposed legislation to allow Queensland Local Governments to engage the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) to conduct polls/plebiscites on our behalf. This legislation is vital to gauge the feelings of our residents in relation to the recently introduced Queensland Local Government Reforms.

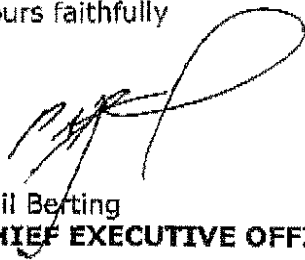
These reforms removed the democratic right of the general public to hold referendums to have some input into the future of their local government boundaries. It is important to note that the Tara Shire Council had been participating in a voluntary reform agenda known as "Size, Shape and Sustainability" (SSS). This process sought to identify processes that could lead to greater efficiencies for local government. This process may have led to council amalgamations, **subject to a referendum of the ratepayers of affected councils.** The legislation introduced by the Queensland Government has removed the democratic right of the community to voice their opinions on the, now wide-spread, forced amalgamation of Councils.

This Council has received several enquiries and requests from residents to hold a referendum to allow them to at least be heard, despite the fact that their opinions will be ignored due to this legislation being rushed through the State Parliament.

In conclusion, on behalf of Council we would urge you to pass legislation to allow this Council to hold a poll/plebiscite without the fear of criminal charges or the threat of Council sacking.

Should you require any additional information in relation to this matter please contact me on 4665 3133.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Berting', written in a cursive style with a large loop at the end.

Phil Berting  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**