

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

Dear Secretary

Due to the unfortunately tight time frame to which this matter has been given I am unable to provide a detailed submission.

However in summary I believe that communities have effectively had their democratic voice removed in relation to forced amalgamations on both the reform process and the subsequent recommendations.

Allowing effected Councils to seek referendums on the forced amalgamation recommendations will provide effected communities the opportunity to have their position officially acknowledged.

Douglas Shire Council would appreciate the opportunity for a representative to address the Senate Inquiry in Cairns on 3rd September 2007.

Yours sincerely

Cr Mike Berwick

***Mayor
Douglas Shire Council***