

Office of the President

Our Reference: 35050 / CR:AG

24 August 2007

Senator Mitch Fifield
Chairperson
Senate Committee on
Finance and Public Administration
fpa.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Senator Fifield,

Inquiry into the Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Democratic Plebiscites) Bill 2007

I write on behalf of the Local Government Association of South Australia to support the Australian Local Government Association's (ALGA) submission to the above Inquiry.

The LGA in SA supports voluntary amalgamations as occurred in South Australia in 1996/97 – a process which saw the number of Councils reduced from 118 to 68. The LGA is conscious that the 2005 Inquiry into the Financial Sustainability of Local Government in SA found no relationship between size and financial sustainability. Council boundaries fundamentally control two things, both of which are vital to communities: the franchise for voting and the incidence of rating. Every other function which a Council performs in SA can be managed jointly across Councils – even the employment of a Chief Executive Officer. SA Councils have a proud history of shared services at the State, regional and local levels.

As a result it is our belief that the views of communities are vital in any amalgamation process and that the capacity for the Australian Electoral Commission to undertake polling for a Council would be a useful addition to options currently available in SA.

Yours sincerely



Mayor Joy Baluch AM
President

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