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Committee Secretary
Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100, Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Level 1, 16 Hutt Street
Adelaide SA 5000

GPO Box 2693
Adelaide SA 5001

Tel 08 8224 2000
Fax 08 8232 6336
Email lgasa@lga.sa.gov.au
Web www.lga.sa.gov.au

ABN 83 058 386 353

Interstate Road Transport Charge Amendment Bill

I am writing to provide feedback on the Interstate Road Transport Charge Amendment Bill (No.2) 2008.

The Bill proposes to amend the *Interstate Road Transport Charge Act 1985* (IRTCA) which imposes registration charges for heavy vehicles registered under the Australian Government's voluntary Federal Interstate Registration Scheme (FIRS).

The Bill allows regulations to be made to specify heavy vehicle charges for application to FIRS vehicles and implements the Council of Australian Governments' request to fully recover the costs of provision of the road network to the heavy vehicle industry.

Perusal of the explanatory memorandum accompanying the Bill indicates revenue from FIRS charges is to be returned to the state and territory governments under an agreed distribution formula that accounts for road usage by FIRS heavy vehicles. This provides that road managers are not financially disadvantaged by permitting greater wear and tear on road networks.

In South Australia the State Government manages nearly 23,000km of road network which represents almost 25% of the state's total road network.

By contrast the Local Government road network in South Australia comprises some 75,000km of road which represents a \$6.8 billion investment. Transport infrastructure costs comprise on average 23 percent of the total operating expenses of Local Government.

It is requested that proposed amendments to the Interstate Road Transport Charge Amendment Bill include appropriate mechanisms to enable Local Government to recover a fair share of costs that will occur as a result of the greater wear and tear on its road network.

Yours sincerely

Michael Barry
Director, Legislation & Environment

Telephone: 8224 2033
Email: michael.barry@lga.sa.gov.au

