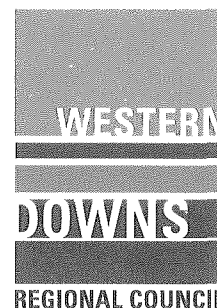




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FILE REF:
9/3/1

PAB:JKN

19 November 2012

Mr Glenn Worthington
Secretary
Joint Select Committee on the Constitutional Reform of Local Government
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir

RE: SUPPORT CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION

I refer to recent correspondence from the Australian Local Government Association dated 9 November 2012, in relation to the update on the progress of Constitutional Recognition.

I wish to reinforce Council's position from its letter dated 31 October 2011, where it was advised that a resolution was passed on 16 February 2011 whereby;

Western Downs Regional Council declares its support for financial recognition of local Government in the Australian Constitution so that the Federal Government has the power to fund local government directly and also for inclusion of local government in any new Preamble to the Constitution if one is proposed, and calls on all political parties to support a referendum by 2013 to change the Constitution to achieve this recognition.

We would also like to reinforce that;

- o Council supports the Federal Government having power to be able to provide funding directly to Local Government where this is the national interest;
- o Council needs certainty of funding so that programs like Roads to Recovery can continue;
- o Council supports an amendment to Section 96 of the Constitution so that it reads: "Parliament may grant financial assistance to any state or local body formed by or under law of a state or territory";
- o Bi-partisan support is an essential precondition if a referendum is to have the best chance of success;
- o Council supports the referendum being held at a time which maximises its chance of success;
- o Council supports a publicly funded national education and awareness campaign to inform the public about the Constitution, how to change it, and about the question being asked before the referendum.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully

Phil Berting PSM
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER