



All communications to be addressed to:
The Chief Executive Officer,
Conran Street, Capella QLD 4723
PO Box 117, Capella QLD 4723
TEL: (07) 49 887 200 FAX: (07) 49 849 618

Enquiries: Cr John Brown
Our Ref: JCB:FHE
Your Ref:

23 August 2007

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

Dear Committee Members

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

Peak Downs Shire Council is a rural local government located in the Central Highlands which is to be amalgamated with the Council's of Bauhinia, Duaringa and Emerald to form the Central Highlands Regional Council under the Queensland Governments reform process.

Residents and electors of this Shire have petitioned Council to conduct a poll on the question of whether there is support for the amalgamation as proposed, however the State legislation (s 159ZY) provides for dismissal of Council by the Minister for participation in such polls. Council is reluctant to breach any legislation and potentially be excluded (through dismissal) from participation in the important transition process over coming months where it is imperative that elected members of all affected councils have opportunity to represent the interests of their constituents.

Peak Downs Shire Council supports the proposed Federal legislation allowing communities to express their democratic rights to record their view on such an important aspect of their local governance and well-being, and it is very clear that this community is so concerned with the likely impact of amalgamation that it would implore the Commonwealth to further intervene so that a proper and complete process could be undertaken to ensure reform will genuinely benefit residents. The brief and very superficial process that has occurred in Queensland is a complete sham and an insult to citizens that expect to have their submissions properly considered and then opportunity to endorse something so fundamental to their community's sustainability and livelihood.

I am happy to further elaborate on the concerns of residents and electors of Peak Downs Shire Council at the Public Hearing scheduled for Emerald on 31 August 2007 and can be contacted by telephone 0417 756325 or 07 498 49237.

Yours faithfully

Cr John Brown
MAYOR