

Good afternoon,

I write to endorse the proposed reform to councillor representative numbers and allowances.

Currently, the cost of a local government election campaign (estimated at nearly \$20,000 per election) is virtually unaffordable for people on an average Tasmanian income. Likewise, once elected, the current rate of remuneration is disqualifying for the average Tasmanian with mortgage or rent to pay - especially given rising costs for most essentials and utilities. As a result, Tasmanian's are overrepresented by Councillors with high-paying part time roles, property investments, family wealth, or businesses to supplement the meagre income from their elected role. This reform is moderate and will make it somewhat easier for candidates from middle class backgrounds to aspire to represent their communities.

This is a sensible and moderate reform. It would take Tasmania from having 2,120 people for every Councillor to 2,746 people for every Councillor. The proposal would not meaningfully change Tasmania's ranking compared to others states and territories on this metric. Tasmania would go from second-last to third-last on that score - overtaking Western Australia's 2217 people per Councillor. This points to the major underlying problem that Tasmania has too many Councils and should not delay the progress of Council amalgamations as a solution to the issues outlined in the report.

By reducing both the number of Councillors and the number of Councils, Tasmanians will benefit from representation that better reflects local demographics, and will benefit from greater equalisation of the rates base and resourcing of local government by amalgamating comparatively wealthy inner-city Councils with comparatively poor outer suburban Councils. These strategies should be pursued urgently and simultaneously.

Thank you for considering this feedback.

Kind regards?

Dr.Bill.Dodd

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