



Hon David Crisafulli MP Minister for Local Government
Community, Recovery and Resilience

Our ref: MC14/4500

Your ref: 10.4 Petitions

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17 DEC 2014

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie *Neil*

Thank you for your letter of 27 November 2014 referring petitions 2344-14 and 2298-14 to me for my response.

The petition calls for the State Government to narrow the powers of local governments in Queensland, limiting their powers to certain prescribed responsibilities. This request is at odds with the Newman Government's commitment to properly empower local governments to improve frontline services and better serve their communities.

Prior to the 2012 election, the Newman Government committed to revitalising the *Local Government Act 2009*, cutting red tape and interference from State Government bureaucrats and ensuring our local councils have the powers required to best serve their communities. The Newman Government recognises the important role Queensland councils play in representing the interests of their local communities and determining the required facilities and services. We realise the job isn't done and will continue to work with councils to deliver our long term economic plan.

As part of that commitment, the past two years have seen significant legislative reform to free local governments from red tape and to provide them with increased powers. The increased powers of local governments are balanced by the accountability requirements of the legislation, including internal and external audit requirements and increased penalties for those who don't play by the rules.

The Queensland Auditor-General is responsible for the external audit of all local governments in Queensland, as well as auditing any entities that are controlled by a council. Each year, the Auditor-General provides a report to Parliament about the local government audits, which includes extensive analysis of current issues and, where appropriate, recommendations for consideration by individual councils and by the Department of Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience.

For the reasons outlined above, it is not my intention to make any changes to the *Local Government Act 2009* as requested by the petitioners.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Crisafulli', written in a cursive style.

David Crisafulli MP
Minister for Local Government,
Community Recovery and Resilience