



The Hon Kristy McBain MP

Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories
Member for Eden-Monaro

Ref: MC24-017232

Mayor Matt Burnett
President
Australian Local Government Association
8 Geils Court
DEAKIN ACT 2600

via: president@alga.asn.au

Dear Mayor Burnett *Matt,*

I am writing in response to the letter from the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) of 12 September 2024, seeking my response to resolutions from ALGA's 2024 National General Assembly (NGA).

I am delighted to have represented the Albanese Labor Government at the NGA as Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories. It was a real pleasure to catch up with so many of the attendees and to hear their views on how the sector has been faring.

Please see enclosed my responses to the resolutions you referred to me, as well as those you referred to Senator the Hon Don Farrell, Special Minister of State, Minister for Trade and Tourism, who has asked me to respond on his behalf.

Thank you for taking the time to seek my response to resolutions in my portfolio responsibilities, I look forward to continuing and strengthening our productive partnership serving the Australian community.

Yours sincerely

Kristy McBain MP

5 / 12/2024

Enc

cc The Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government
Senator the Hon Don Farrell, Special Minister of State and Minister for Trade and Tourism

Resolutions referred to the Hon Kristy McBain MP

The Financial Assistance Grant and the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport inquiry into local government sustainability

Resolutions: 2, 3, 8, 19, 20, 29, 32, 33 and 92

The Australian Government's commitment to a strong and sustainable local government sector is as enduring as it is substantial, with the Financial Assistance Grant (FA Grant) as our primary mechanism for contributing to the long-term financial certainty of councils.

To ensure the Government's future support for local government is informed by objective and up to date evidence, the Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government referred the issue of local government sustainability to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport, which was accepted for inquiry.

I am pleased to confirm that, based on more than 280 written submissions received and 16 public hearings to date, the Committee is considering the widest possible range of stakeholder perspectives on the issues that affect local government sustainability. The Government will consider its policies and programs that support local government sustainability in the context of findings and recommendations from the Inquiry.

Building community trust in local government

Resolution 24:

The Government has honoured our commitment to elevate and empower the voice of local government through reinstating the Australian Council of Local Governments and periodically inviting ALGA to National Cabinet and Council for Federal Financial Relations meetings. Local government's inclusion in these important national conversations is testament to the esteem in which the Commonwealth holds local government, which in turn elevates community trust and respect for local councils.

Resolutions referred to Senator the Hon Don Farrell

Limiting the effects of misinformation on election outcomes

Resolutions: 160 and 161

Notwithstanding that the conduct and integrity of local government elections remains the purview of the states and territories; following a referral from the Special Minister of State, Senator the Hon Don Farrell, the Australian Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters (JSCEM) is inquiring into civics education, engagement, and participation in Australia (Civics Inquiry). The Civics Inquiry is considering the effectiveness of approaches to formal civics education delivered by schools and other institutions, including electoral

commissions, councils, and parliaments. It is also examining the informal mechanisms through which Australians seek and receive information about our democracy and electoral events and the formal mechanisms available to assist voters to understand the legitimacy of electoral information and messaging. Through the Civics Inquiry, the Committee will identify ways for governments and the community to limit the influence of misleading information on electoral outcomes. You may like to follow the work of the committee at www.aph.gov.au/em.

Supporting a sustainable visitor economy

Resolution 34

The Australian Trade and Investment Commission, with support from the Treasury, is collaborating with stakeholders across Government and industry via the Thrive 2030 strategy to assist in addressing the challenges to the visitor economy. I understand that this collaboration includes consideration of the impacts of rising insurance costs on the viability of events and facilities, and that any solutions arising from this work will seek to support our regions to remain world-class tourist and event destinations.