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Our Refs: D14/33410; D14/45650

30 June 2014

By E-mail

The Research Director
State Development, Infrastructure
and Industry Committee
sdiic@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

**Invitation to Make a Submission into the Electricity Competition and Protection Legislation
Amendment Bill 2014 and the National Energy Retail Law (Queensland) Bill 2014**

Thank you for providing the Maranoa Regional Council (MRC) with the opportunity to comment on the abovementioned inquiries.

Council supports the Electricity Competition and Protection Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. The South East Queensland (SEQ) region possesses the critical mass of population required to support the proposed deregulation, thereby achieving improving competition in the electricity market. Council believes that price regulation should continue in rural and regional areas indefinitely; therefore, MRC agrees with the inclusion of s 90(1), stating that the Minister will retain the power to regulate electricity prices outside of SEQ. Without the regulation of the electrical industry, it is speculated that regional consumers would be forced to pay a premium for the expansive network required to service the dispersed population.

In relation to the National Energy Retail Law (Queensland) Bill 2014, the provision of consumer protections will ensure that regional customers continue to pay fair rates, regardless of their geographic separation from major electrical infrastructure. The MRC services an estimated population base of 18,375 (inclusive of transient workers), within a regional area of 58,830 km². Given the comparatively low population density of the region, the consumer protections contained within the proposed legislation are required to maintain the lifestyle and livability of the Maranoa.

Council would like to commend the Queensland Government's decision to maintain electricity market regulation in rural and regional areas of Queensland, whilst simultaneously introducing additional protections for all electricity consumers in the state. If you have any further queries regarding Council's response to these inquiries, please contact Council's representative, Ryan Gittins, on one of the numbers listed above.

Yours faithfully



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Chief Executive Officer

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