



Speech by
Jeff Seeney

MEMBER FOR CALLIDE

Hansard Wednesday, 6 June 2007

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

Mr SEENEY (Callide—NPA) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.28 am): This morning the Clerk tabled into the record of the parliament paper petitions with signatures totalling 14,700 Queenslanders who oppose the amalgamation of local governments. A similar e-petition has 7,356 signatures. I now table a non-conforming petition with a further 1,436 signatures. I know that there are other petitions.

Tabled paper: Non conforming petition protesting against forced amalgamations of Queensland Councils.

Well over 24,000 people have signed petitions opposing the government's forced amalgamations of councils. It proves beyond doubt the falseness of the Premier's claims that the only people who were opposing his moves were the local councillors, the mayors and the CEOs. Some 24,000 Queenslanders have been so incensed by this proposal that they have signed petitions to go to this parliament. Those Queenslanders will continue to protest right across Queensland because they know the threat that this proposal poses to their communities. They will continue that tidal wave of protest that has swept Queensland for the last month.

The Premier believes that this issue can be swept away. He believes that if he can get a good television grab or get a good media report then this issue can be swept away. It is but one example of the disconnect between the government's rhetoric and the reality in Queensland. Time and time again we see the government try to address problems by addressing the politics, by getting a good media grab, by getting a good photo opportunity and by getting a good report somewhere and then it thinks the problem has gone away. Those people who sit in the hospital waiting rooms know that the health crisis has not gone away. Those people who wait for ambulances know that the ambulance crisis has not gone away. Those people who carry water in their buckets to keep their pot plants alive know that the water crisis has not gone away, and neither will the anger about local government amalgamations go away.