

**Submission
No 80**

HEALTH SERVICES AMENDMENT (SPLITTING OF THE HUNTER NEW ENGLAND HEALTH DISTRICT) BILL 2025

Organisation: Inverell Shire Council

Date Received: 24 April 2025

Our Reference: S24.20.5

16 April 2025

Mr Clayton Barr MP
Committee Chair
Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services
Parliament House, Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Barr,

**HEALTH SERVICES AMENDMENT (SPLITTING OF THE HUNTER NEW ENGLAND
HEALTH DISTRICT) BILL 2025 INQUIRY**

Council would like to thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the subject Inquiry.

Council first considered this matter at its ordinary meeting on the 26 February 2025. It was subsequently resolved that:

- i. *Council offer its support for the proposed State Government Inquiry in response to the Health Services Amendment (Splitting Hunter New England Health District) Bill 2025; and*
- ii. *Inverell Shire Council make a submission to the Inquiry.*

The matter was further considered by Council at their ordinary meeting on the 26 March 2025. As a result, Council resolved to delegate authority to the Mayor and General Manager to make a submission to your Inquiry consistent with the principles contained within the accompanying report to Council.

Mr Roy Butler MP corresponded with Council on the 12 February 2025 identifying his reasoning for introducing the subject Bill being the decrease in services to the New England Northwest area of the current HNELHD. Whilst Council certainly understands and appreciates the genesis for the Bill, what is not clear, is how the structural change (the split) identified in the Bill would result in improved service levels on the ground. To better inform our submission, Council corresponded with Mr Butler on the 14 March 2025 (copy attached) seeking details regarding any supporting information that may have been considered in formulating the Bill (cost benefit analysis etc). At the time of writing Council has yet to receive a response.

Whilst Inverell Shire Council have received feedback both in support of and against the Bill, at this stage there would not appear to be a substantive cognisant case put forward as to how the splitting of the health district would facilitate improved service levels to community members.

Accordingly, at this point in time Council remains neutral in regards to any structural change to the Hunter New England Local Health District (HNELHD) and would reiterate its support for the Inquiry to further examine the matter.

Council and members of the Inverell Health Forum have been actively engaging and working collaboratively with HNELHD in recent months to facilitate improved outcomes in delivery of health services across Inverell Shire. These actions have been guided by Council's resolved position of the 22 May 2024 being that "*Council continue to advocate at all available levels for improved levels of service at the Inverell Hospital consistent with reasonable community*

expectation'. Council would certainly not support any structural reform actions that would result in the diminution of services currently offered at the Inverell Hospital.

Council appreciates the opportunity to comment on this important health matter and will take a keen interest in the progression of the Inquiry.

Should the need arise, myself or Mayor Cr Kate Dight would only be too happy to further elaborate on the contents of this submission.



BRETT MCINNES

GENERAL MANAGER

Our Reference: S24.20.5

14 March 2025

Mr Roy Butler MP
Member for Barwon
1/60 Maitland Street
NARRABRI NSW 2390

By Email: barwon@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Butler,

**HEALTH SERVICES AMENDMENT (SPLITTING OF THE HUNTER NEW ENGLAND
HEALTH DISTRICT) BILL 2025.**

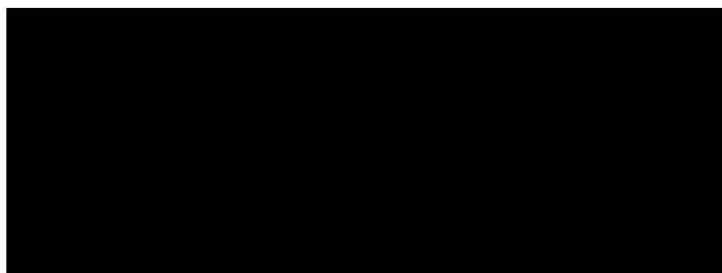
I acknowledge receipt of your correspondence dated 12 February 2025 regarding the subject Bill and wish to advise that I reported the matter to Council at their Ordinary Meeting held on 26 February 2025.

Council subsequently resolved to offer its support for the State Government Inquiry and to provide a submission in response to the draft Bill.

In guiding our submission, I am seeking your assistance in regards to any supporting information that may have been considered in formulating the draft Bill. Whilst Council certainly understands and appreciates the motivation for change, we would seek to better understand the rationale for the split. Council is not philosophically opposed to the structural change within the Hunter New England Local Health District, however we would appreciate further details on how the mechanics of such a change would result in improved service levels on the ground. Council notes the comments of the Health Minister in regards to costs associated with duplicated administration (non frontline) under the split model and is also curious as to any cost benefit analysis that may have been put forward in support of the split.

Thank you for your time in considering Council's request and any information you are able to offer will be of assistance in Council formulating its submission by the due date of 12 April 2025.

Please do not hesitate contacting me should you wish to discuss this matter further.



BRETT MCINNES

GENERAL MANAGER