

Submission
No 186

INQUIRY INTO ELECTORAL AND POLITICAL PARTY FUNDING

Organisation: Sutherland Shire Council
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Reverend the Hon. Frederick Nile MLC
Chair Inquiry - Electoral and Political Party Funding
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

- 9 APR 2008

Dear Reverend

Electoral and Political Party Funding

The current Independent Commission Against Corruption investigation into allegations that officials of Wollongong City Council and developers have engaged in corrupt conduct in relation to the assessment of development applications and a range of other matters is of great concern to Local Government.

To improve transparency and probity in Local Government Council has taken the following decision:

1. *To restore confidence and transparency in local and state government Council communicate to the Prime Minister, the Premier of NSW, the Leader of the NSW Opposition and the Chair of the Upper House Inquiry into political donations seeking their commitment to introduce and support legislation:*
 - *in relation to development applications to require applicants, owners and persons who are associated with the application to disclose their affiliations with Councillors and staff of the Council and declare political donations at the time of lodging a development application;*
 - *that the voting record of Councillors on development applications be recorded and put on the public record;*
 - *to ensure full disclosure and transparency the electoral funding authority be given the necessary powers to enforce the legislation regarding the completion of the electoral returns of candidates.*
 - *that in the interests of transparency in local government reforms be introduced that require all elected Councillors to report and record all political donations to themselves or their party or group in a publicly available document. Donations in bulk from political parties should not be accepted unless sources of these funds are disclosed in detail.*

2. *That this legislation be introduced and be effective before the 2008 Local Government elections;*

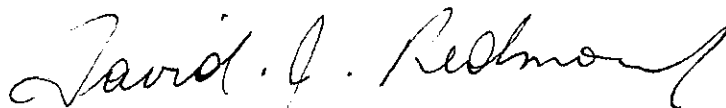
In addition to the above, which Council believes should be implemented by Government, Council resolved to demonstrate its commitment to progressing this matter by further resolving the following:

3. Noting the general political intention to call for the development and implementation of new guidelines for Councils to assist in addressing perceived conflicts of interest arising from donations, Council implement the proposals in this motion as an interim measure.
4. That Council's statement of Business Ethics, Code of Conduct, Meeting Protocols and Development Application form be amended to require disclosures of affiliations with Councillors and staff of the Council.
5. With the view to further improving transparency and probity the General Manager report to Council on the establishment of a Register which would record approaches to Council, Councillors and staff from lobbyists and other persons in regard to rezoning, development applications, supply of goods and services, events and other matters in which Council and/or staff will make decisions.

Council is seeking your support for the introduction of these changes of legislation which Council believes will restore confidence and transparency in local and state government. I have also written to the Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, the Premier of NSW, The Hon Morris Iemma MP and the Leader of the NSW Opposition, Mr Barry O'Farrell MP seeking their support in the introduction of this legislation.

Your support will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely



Councillor David Redmond
Mayor