

Economics and Governance Committee

From: Sally Spain [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 9 January 2020 5:00 PM
To: Economics and Governance Committee
Subject: Submission re electoral & other legislation
Categories: Submissions

Committee Secretary

Economics and Governance Committee

Parliament House

George Street

Brisbane Qld 4000

Email: egc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary,

Wildlife Queensland, Gold Coast & Hinterland Branch , the tenor of the proposed reforms to ensure that Local Councils represent whole of community.

Wildlife Queensland, GC & H ,has advocated as a not for profit, voluntary Organization for over half a century. Its mission is to protect our native fauna and flora heritage for community and future generations.

We endorse and concur with the Submission on this matter from our peak regional body GECKO.

Our Organization supports new register of interests requirements, new and clarified conflict of interest requirements, new requirements for political advisors, provisions relating to the dissolution of a local government and administrators and changes for filling Councillor and Mayor vacancies.

We share concerns expressed in the GECKO submission with regard to the potential stifling of not for profit, charitable, volunteer bodies, whose endeavours are based on altruism, and recommend amendments as suggested in that submission.

The recent experience of the Gold Coast Council informs our considered position that there is no room for political Advisors or Chief of Staff positions within the Westminster Separation of Powers framework and further that Councillors are sufficiently served via the executive roles of officers headed by a Chief Executive Officer. The employment of the Chief Executive Officer should be subject to a whole of Council vote at Open Council Meeting.

\$500 not \$2000 for gift to Ministers should be the threshold, a more realistic basis for transparent, disinterested advocacy . (Section 177D)

Agendas, Minutes should be timely and live streaming immediate for all Planning, and Council Meetings and Closed Session Decisions and Redacted Reports subject to written justification via Report to the Minister and the Office of the Independent Assessor.

Referrals and complaints to the Minister for Local Government and Office of the Independent Assessor re Council and Councillors should not be referred back to Council for deliberation, decision and action. Action should be directed by Minister and/or OIA .

Scrutiny, via the Minister and the OIA should be mandated with regard to the nature of Council Community Consultation and there should be powers to ensure that Committees are minuted, exist in inclusive form and have powers of recommendation that are considered in full and open Council Meetings.

Sally Spain, President

Wildlife Queensland (formerly Wildlife Preservation Society Inc.) Gold Coast Branch

