

From: Meg Blackman
Sent: Friday, 18 January 2013 8:36 AM
To: Elections
Subject: Submission - Review into the size of the ACT Legislative Assembly

I am writing in response to the above discussion paper.

In relation to the terms of reference, particularly point 2, 'consider factors relevant to increasing the size of the Assembly', I would like to submit the following:

- The ACT Assembly operates in an inefficient manner. It should apply efficiency principles to itself before even considering increasing the numbers of MLAs.
- I consider the Assembly to be highly inefficient as it stands. It would therefore a waste of resources to increase more of the same.
- This is because it is evident that other large jurisdiction in Australia, such as Brisbane City Council, are able to deliver despite having significantly fewer Councillors per capita than we have MLAs, even when you factor in the ACT's 'State level' responsibilities.
- According to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/City_of_Brisbane , Brisbane City Council has 27 councillors (only 10 more representatives than the ACT Assembly) yet delivers services to a population the size of Tasmania, the ACT and NT combined.
- Applying these 'per head' stats generously to the ACT population, only about 9 councillors would be needed to run the 'local council' aspects of the ACT. This would leave the other eight ACT MLAs to manage the 'State level' portfolios - a generous number indeed. On this basis, there is no way that an increase in MLAs is justified. All elected MLAs should be involved in the business of managing the ACT properly - that is why they were elected.
- The ACT Govt should be mortified, embarrassed and ashamed that the so-called 'struggle town', Queanbeyan, has better town services than Canberra and that its constituents pay lower rates (case in point, free hard rubbish collections for all constituents). Canberra is now the struggle town and will continue to be so until we get a more efficient government framework. However, more MLAs will not fix the problem.
- In summary, increasing MLAs is not the solution, as it is akin to throwing good money after bad. I therefore would not support the proposal to have more MLAs in the ACT Assembly.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission. I would be grateful if you could acknowledge receipt of this submission.

Yours sincerely

Meg Blackman