

Liberals back down on John Howard's Local Democracy Laws

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BY OUR CIVIC ROUNDSMAN

The Liberal Party has refused to back John Howard's laws to enable a referendum on local democracy and the Save Hunters Hill Municipality Coalition has urged voters in North Sydney to put the Liberal Party last on Saturday.



The Weekly Times North Sydney Meet the Candidates Forum organised and chaired by Don Murchison. Candidates seated, l to r, James Coffey Science Party, Peter Hayes Labor, Trent Zimmerman MP Liberal, Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans The Greens, June Scifo representing Sharon Martin Christian Democratic Party and Independent Dr Stephen Ruff endorsed by former North Sydney Mayor and MP Ted Mack. TWT on-the-spot PHOTO.

The Coalition on Sunday surveyed election candidates on their position on the Baird government's proposed forced merger of Hunters Hill and Lane Cove into Ryde, despite opposition from more than 80 per cent of surveyed local ratepayers.

While Liberal candidate and North Sydney MP Trent Zimmerman is personally opposed to forced amalgamations his party will not oppose Baird's undemocratic forced mergers and will not support a referendum on the issue as endorsed by former Prime Minister John Howard and enshrined in legislation introduced by Mr Howard.

"The Liberal member for North Sydney Trent Zimmerman stated at the Meet the Candidates Forum at Hunters Hill on Sunday, June 26 that he is not able to sign the commitment form as the Liberal Party's policy is for forced amalgamations and the party does not support federal plebiscites," according to SOCC member and Save Hunters Hill Municipality Coalition co-convenor former Hunters Hill Councillor and barrister Phil Jenkyn OAM.

"Given the seriousness of the attack on local democracy and the clear breach of trust by the Baird government and the Liberal Party, consideration must be given to placing that party last in this election."



John Howard

Mr Jenkyn hopes that traditional Liberal voters who love Hunters Hill will vote to send a message to the Liberals that they value democracy and want to keep their historic municipality and want to keep it the way it is.

“This is an important election for all those who care about local democracy, honesty and transparency in government and the keeping of election promises,” Mr Jenkyn said.

“On the issue of forced council amalgamations, the Liberal Party and the Baird government have trashed all of the above.”

The Coalition believes there are alternative candidates who support democracy and whose political parties are on record in defence of local democracy.

What do the Political Parties in the seat of North Sydney say about FORCED COUNCIL AMALGAMATIONS?

Save Our Councils Coalition recommends you vote for a party or independent that says YES opposing Forced Amalgamations and YES supporting valid Referendums.

*POLITICAL PARTY	CANDIDATE	OPPOSE FORCED AMALGAMATIONS	FOR VALID REFERENDUMS
INDEPENDENT	Stephen RUFF	YES	YES
CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS	Sharon MARTIN	YES	YES
THE GREENS	Arthur CHESTERFIELD -EVANS	YES	YES
LIBERAL	Trent ZIMMERMAN	NO	NO
FAMILY FIRST	Eddy KU	NO	NO
LABOR	Peter HAYES	YES	YES
LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	Daniel LEAHY	NO	NO
SCIENCE PARTY	James COFFEY	NO	NO

**Results of a Survey sent to all Candidates by Save Our Councils Coalition. Candidates who answered NO or did not respond to the questions are recorded in the negative.*



Save Our Councils Coalition (SOCC) is non-party political.

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“Stephen Ruff (Independent), Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans (The Greens), Peter Hayes (Labor) and Sharon Martin (Christian Democratic Party), individually and on behalf of their parties, are all opposed to forced amalgamations and all support valid referendums,” he said.

“These four have also signed on behalf of their parties our Candidate Commitment on Local Democracy form.”

Mr Jenkyn also refuted claims that Baird’s attack on democracy is not a Federal issue.

“The Federal Government as a result of legislation brought in by John Howard can now fund plebiscites in circumstance where there are forced council amalgamations within a State.”

“Political Parties like the Liberal Party transcend State boundaries.

“The issue of trust – whether a political party can be trusted – is very much an issue at play in this election.”

