

HUNTERS HILL

Packed house over merge

Angry petitioners protest against plans to force amalgamation of local governments

John Besley

IT was standing-room only for the Save Hunters Hill Municipality Coalition's anti-amalgamation rally at Hunters Hill Town Hall.

Concerned residents packed into the Town Hall to voice their opinions on the controversial issue, with Save Our Councils Coalition spokeswoman Carolyn Corrigan announcing a pet-

ition calling for the resignation of the Minister for Local Government, State National MP Paul Toole.

The petition, which currently has 344 signatures, states that Minister Toole "does not have the confidence of the people of NSW" and also calls for the forced amalgamation process to be dumped.

"Genuine improvements and reforms of the local gov-

ernment sector can be achieved but not with Paul Toole," the petition states.

If you care about local democracy, you are against forced amalgamation

Phil Jenkyn

Mrs Corrigan was joined at the podium by SHHMC

spokesman Phil Jenkyn, who called for voters to make their point known at the ballot box.

"I wasn't sure what reaction I would get, but I asked if we get amalgamated, would people vote for (State Liberal MP) Anthony Roberts," said Mr Jenkyn.

"The answer was an almighty no."

According to Mr Jenkyn, the strong attendance at the

rally proved that the local community was against forced amalgamation.

"It's not easy getting people coming out at night, so the community's feeling towards this is very understandable" he said.

"If you care about local democracy, you are against forced amalgamation.

"Only local government's can micromanage the needs of the community."