

Dictator Baird Helps Labor's Chances in Federal Election

An arrogant dictatorial Premier Baird will hurt Coalition candidates at the July 2 Federal Election proclaimed on Monday.

Voters want to express their opposition to the Baird State Government's undemocratic compulsory amalgamation of local councils and will do so by boycotting Liberal candidates as they did at the North Sydney by-election.

Their anger may topple the Turnbull government on July 2.

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BY OUR CIVIC ROUNDSMAN

A backlash against the Liberal Party over forced Council mergers is expected to damage the election chances of local Liberal Federal MPs Trent Zimmerman in North Sydney, John Alexander in Bennelong and Craig Laundy in Reid.

Three local Labor candidates have confirmed they will seize the opportunity to exploit widespread community anger over the proposed forced mergers and subsequent “lies” on the issue exposed by broadcaster Alan Jones and The Weekly Times.

A Save Our Councils rally in Bondi last week also resolved to target Federal MPs and the SOC Coalition will have a strong presence at local polling booths.

“We are taking this upcoming Federal Election campaign as an opportunity to empower communities to continue advocating for local democracy,” the Coalition said.

Labor candidate for North Sydney Peter Hayes and Bennelong’s ALP candidate Lyndal Howison have both signed a Coalition pledge against forced mergers and Ms Howison hopes the backlash against Baird’s “broken promises” will swing the election outcome in her favour.

“These amalgamations are a broken election promise and the boundaries that have been proposed have been rightly named as a gerrymander,” she told The Weekly Times.

“There are so many things wrong with these amalgamations its hard know where to start.”



Gladesville's own Knitting Nannas group held a three day vigil outside NSW Parliament last week to protest against Baird's attacks on democracy. TWT on-the-spot PHOTO

North Sydney MP Trent Zimmerman has already felt a community backlash of up to 17 per cent in Hunters Hill during the recent by election, which he ultimately won.

Although he has yet to sign the pledge he concedes the damage has been done by Baird to the Liberal brand.

"I've no doubt the swing of 17 per cent against the Liberal Party in Hunters Hill was because of the strength of community feeling about the forced merger," he said.

"I'm opposed to forced amalgamations and I strongly believe you should only merge councils with the clear support of the community, which is not the case in Hunters Hill and Lane Cove," he said.

Mr Zimmerman said he found it hard to argue there is a common community of interest between Lane Cove, Hunters Hill and Ryde, an argument being put forward by forced merger supporters.

"Our councils are the level of government closest to the community and that contact that you have is at risk of being lost."

Bennelong MP John Alexander and Reid MP Craig Laundy have declined to support or oppose the forced mergers which Mr Alexander insists is a State issue.

In Reid Labor candidate and local Mayor Angelo Tsirekas has been critical of the Baird Government's integrity.

He said: "This is definitely an election issue, it is about integrity of the Liberal Party and the people should decide."

<http://www.weeklytimes.com.au/baird-aids-labors-federal-chances/>