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BEREJKLIAN GOVT DECLARES WAR ON NSW COMMUNITIES OVER FORCED MERGERS

The Berejiklian Liberal/National Government today rejected a Bill in the Lower House of the Parliament that would have allowed it to 'put to bed' its hated and despised forced council amalgamations policy.

In voting down the Local Government Amendment (Amalgamation Referendums) Bill 2017 in the Legislative Assembly, the Government has refused to allow communities forcibly amalgamated in the city and the bush to have a say on whether they wanted their council back.

"The Berejiklian Government has clearly shown that they fear the people and are not prepared to listen to communities" says Phil Jenkyn spokesman for Save Our Councils Coalition (SOCC). "They have made it clear that their policy of forced council amalgamations continues."

"You would think that they might have learnt something from the recent by-elections in the city and country where there have been massive swings against them in areas where forced mergers were a major issue – Manly 24%, North Shore 15%, Cootamundra 20% and Murray 15%," Jenkyn added.

"It is clear that this Government has declared war on local communities," says SOCC President Brian Halstead. "Save Our Councils will now fight with increased determination to see that this Government is thrown out at the next State election. It does not properly represent communities, it is arrogant and does not listen."

"All political parties and independents, except the Liberal/National Party, supported the Bill. They also support SOCCs principles of no forced amalgamations, keeping local government truly local and fair and proper referendums," Halstead says. "If a Government ignores the will of the people, it is doomed to failure."

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