

# New Wagga MP Community Focused

Pittwater Online News 16 September 2018

The declaration on Friday 14 September of the Wagga poll with the election of Independent Dr Joe McGirr demonstrates that focus on community, local issues and democracy were key attributes to his winning the Riverina located seat.

The result is a massive defeat for the Government in the former safe seat, with a swing in the primary vote against the Liberals of 28 percent and after preferences 22.5 percent.

After the distribution of preferences Dr McGirr finished up with an astonishing 60 percent on a two-party preferred basis as opposed to the Liberals Julia Ham's 40 percent.

Save our Council Coalition (SOCC) congratulates Dr McGirr on his win and thanks all the candidates and parties, except the Liberal and National parties, for their support for demergers of councils that were forced to merge against the will of their community.

During campaigning on election day the Labor leader Luke Foley publicly promised a delegation from Tumbarumba that Labor would allow them to demerge from the Snowy Valleys Council provided Labor won the March 2019 State election, and a plebiscite of their former council area proved favourable.



During the campaign Dr McGirr also told SOCC that he was against forced council amalgamations and would support the demerger of Tumbarumba if a plebiscite was supportive.

SOCC President, Brian Halstead, said many NSW Council communities want to demerge including Tumbarumba, Guyra and Pittwater. "There is mounting evidence that many of the forced mergers in both country and city are failing and demerging their councils will serve to improve community representation, services and financial performance," Halstead said.

Members of SOCC with “Put Libs Last” and number every box signs and “Save Tumbarumba Shire” members with demerge signs, were at polling booths on election day and at prepolling making a striking impact.

“Local communities whose councils were forcibly merged remain concerned and angry. The Liberal and National Party has refused to listen to these concerns and many in the community have simply lost trust and faith in the Government,” said Phil Jenkyn SOCC spokesman.



Save Our Councils Coalition (SOCC)