

Reaction to the NSW Government's decision to merge local councils

AAP on May 12, 2016

NSW Premier Mike Baird:

"The most comprehensive local government reform in more than 100 years will result in 19 new councils beginning operations from today."

Deputy Premier and Nationals leader Troy Grant:

"I have listened to the delegates, listened to the Walcha community and that's been for five years. I have not listened to Barnaby Joyce in the last five minutes."

Local Government Minister Paul Toole:

"What we're clearly saying today is, if you're running for council to receive a financial benefit then that's no longer going to be happening in the state of NSW."

NSW Opposition Leader Luke Foley:

"This is an appalling, travesty of democracy in our state. What we've seen is the greatest act of boundary-rigging in Australian politics since Joh Bjelke-Petersen's notorious gerrymander of the 1970s."

Greens MLC David Shoebridge:

"Mike Baird has delivered a hell of a mess for local government across the state. We can unwind the damage Baird has done."

Robert Brown, Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party:

"You can't run your government without us, Mike. You've made a bad mistake."

Fred Nile, Christian Democrats:

"We saw the first crack in Mike Baird's armour today with a number of councils not being forced to merge - the ones where people are so angry it will affect their votes in the

forthcoming federal election. I'm sure Malcolm Turnbull got on the phone to Mike Baird saying, 'take the heat off our candidates.'"

Phil Jenkyn, Save our Councils Coalition:

"What he (Baird) has done is to create big bureaucracies which can be manipulated by the government and by developers."

Darcy Byrne, mayor of Leichhardt:

"Winter has come to inner-Westeros and like Ned Stark, the heads of democratically-elected representatives across the inner-west have been chopped off."

Jeff Morris, North Sydney deputy mayor:

"The state government has today cherry-picked all the council mergers in marginal seats in the federal election and taken them out of the process."

Graeme Kelly: United Services Union:

"Many tens of thousands of council workers, and in most cases, employed by the largest employer in town, are in fear of their further employment prospects."

Councillor Rochelle Porteous, former mayor of Leichhardt:

"Not one council area in NSW by majority has said that they want these councils amalgamated. All they're interested in is to deliver to their development mates and to deliver to their political aspirations."

Lynne Czinner, former mayor of Pittwater:

"Warringah will have by far the greater number of councillors. Their culture is very different from the Pittwater people and the Manly people. It means the culture of Pittwater will disappear."



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