XX May 2023

The Hon. Daniel Mookhey MLC

Treasurer

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The Hon. Jihad Dib MP

Minister for Emergency Services

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The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP

Minister for Local Government

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<Your local State MP or MPs>

Member for XXXXXX

*Online contact details available here:* [*https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/members/pages/all-members.aspx?house=LA*](https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/members/pages/all-members.aspx?house=LA)

*OR BY POST*

GPO Box 5341

SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear XXXXXX

**Damaging increase in Emergency Services Levy costs**

I write to you on behalf of <Council name> to seek your urgent action to avoid serious impacts on the financial sustainability of our Council as a result of the NSW Government’s decision to impose an enormous increase in the Emergency Services Levy on our Council.

For <Council name>, the NSW Government invoice we have received for the ESL represents an increase of $XXX,XXX for 2023/24, bringing the total Council contribution to $XXX,XXX.

For the last four years, the NSW Government has acknowledged the unsustainable burden of ESL increases on local government by funding the annual increases in the levy for councils. Our Council is alarmed that the new NSW Government has suddenly ceased this important contribution.

The 2023/24 ESL increase reflected in the NSW Government invoice we have received amounts to XX% of the expected increase in <Council name’s> rate income for the year. If the NSW Government’s decision is not reversed, the potential impacts on Council’s services, infrastructure maintenance and delivery include:

* XXX
* XXX
* XXX

IPART-approved rate rises are intended to compensate for the impacts of inflation and increases in council costs. Instead, the rate revenue will have to be diverted to the significantly higher ESL payments this year. NSW councils will have no option other than to make cuts to infrastructure and services expenditure.

The timing of this development is particularly challenging for councils as it comes so late in the local government budgeting cycle, well after IPART’s rate determination for the coming financial year and at a time of soaring inflation and ongoing costs of disaster recovery.

Would you please urgently work to ensure the NSW Government:

* restores the ESL subsidy in 2023/24,
* passes legislation to decouple the ESL from the rate peg to enable councils to recover the full cost, and
* develops a fairer, more transparent and financially sustainable method of funding critically important emergency services in consultation with local government.

Without your assistance in this matter, the financial sustainability of our Council will be placed in serious jeopardy, forcing cuts to our services and infrastructure delivery and harming our community’s quality of life.

For further information or to arrange a meeting, please contact <contact name> at <email> or on <phone>.

Yours sincerely

Cr XXXXXX

Mayor