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Submission: Dear IPART

This is a formal objection to the Port Stephens council's proposal to increase rates by 66% over 7 years.

████████████████████ I am disgusted that over 70% of submissions to council's proposal were against the increase. Over 2000 local people took the time and effort to inform the council that they do not want the proposed increase. Yet the council is choosing to ignore this response from our community members.

On a personal note, we moved to Port Stephens from Sydney for the lower cost of living. Port Stephens council represented to us a sound council with fair rates for the community. The council has shown that they have the capacity to fund large scale projects without the need for a rate rise and is one of only a few councils in NSW that has not had to go onto debt.

I have attended community meetings and have been left confused about the council's proposed projects because the council has changed the amounts of money allocated to projects between what was presented to us as a community and what it is now presenting to IPART. None of the proposed projects are essential to our community or to council continuing to operate.

We are a single income household because we have handicapped children who need care. With wages remaining stagnant and increases in all other living expenses this rate rise would severely impact our quality of living and we would probably need to move out of the area. It takes a lot to settle children with disability and setup for all of their needs. We did it once because we could no longer afford to live in Sydney and now we may be forced to do it again so that the council can fund non essential projects which the community have voted against. These submissions to IPART have not been widely advertised so I fear you may not have as many submissions as were sent to council but please take note of the 70% of submissions originally sent to council against this rate rise. and reject this application out right.