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Submission: To whom it may concern,

While I have an open mind towards voluntary council amalgamations, I strongly oppose forced amalgamations. Especially, as this Government has failed, in my mind, to put forward any compelling case as to any clear advantages/benefits of forced amalgamations, beyond a fairly generic 'bigger is better' overtone.

Moreover, the audacity of this process is unnerving. With no real business case I can see (instead picking and choosing selectively from recommendations), and in the face of near unanimous opposition to the idea of amalgamation (from both residents AND businesses), this Government seems committed to pushing this through with blinkers on. One has to wonder why. For, if the overwhelming majority of residents, businesses, experts and the councils themselves think this is a bad idea - then surely that should be the end of it.

As a resident of the City of Sydney I do not want to endure the unavoidable inefficiency, distraction and duplication of years of trying to fit four councils (who fiercely oppose the idea of amalgamation) into a single mega-council. I do not want to suffer the loss of service quality and representation that is the inevitable consequence of a 'bigger' machine.

Especially when the City of Sydney is already over-achieving (even by the Government's own 'fit for the future' benchmarks). If it ain't broke - don't fix it. Premier Baird - leave successful, functioning, prosperous local governments alone - and focus instead on the very real issues of transport, education (ie. Gonski) and housing affordability. This is where we are truly not fit for the future.

Regards,

Nicholas Bonich