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Submission: I am making this submission to register my objection for IPART to grant the Ballina Shire Council another rate variation for the 2017/2018, 2018/2019, & 2019/2020, rate periods.

“The proposed special rate variation is a 4.9% increase for 2017/18 and 5.9% for 2018/19 and 2019/20. The IPART confirmed rate peg limit for 2017/18 is 1.5% and 2.5% is the estimate for 2018/19 and 2019/20. Therefore the proposal represents an extra 3.4% for the three years and the compounded total increase for the three years is 16.70% “.

My main submission is that this form of rate increase is becoming a "normal" method for council to operate over budget, without concern for the real time financial hardships that face Rate Payers at this unstable economical time.

The last special rate rise (2015/2016, & 2016/2017) benefit has only just expired, with the council having made no apparent effort to reign in its expenditure to a sustainable level.

The requirement by IPART to request community input and attitude to these rate rises has largely been abused by this shire, by keeping meetings to obtain information, as low key as possible, whereby Ratepayers normally only know of these meetings following their conclusion.

Ballina Council Administration & Councilors needs to revisit their obligations & responsibilities to the Ratepayers instead of using them as an ATM to pay for their inability to construct, and prioritize projects within a budgetary limitation governed by actual monies received from property rates within the Shire.