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Submission: Since a meeting held in Ulladulla by rate payers and Councillors last Monday, I have been informed that you have approved a rates increase for our States Councils of 1.5%. In the current climate, this proposed rate rise seems fair and is widely accepted by the rate payers of our region. However, 7 of our 12 Councillors are proposing an increase of 13% this financial year, with another 13% next financial year followed by 4% the following 2 years, compounded. As an increase of only 1.5% was deemed appropriate by IPART, the proposal by the local Councillors seems exorbitant to say the least.

I wish to protest in the strongest possible terms to the local Councillors proposal, of more than 30% over the next 4 years. This proposal would make land rates unaffordable for many households, included but not limited to the significant elderly and retiree population in the area, many of whom have no access to pensioner discounts on rate payments. Personally, my rates total \$1640 each year, which is already very high compared to many other NSW towns for a similar sized block & services. If the council is unable to manage costs with already higher rates payment, this can only point to economic mismanagement by the council.

Further to this, I wish to protest the manner in which our councillors have gone about introducing the rates increase. The councillors have called a meeting immediately AFTER the cut off for objections, rather than before the event. This seems deceptive, arrogant and unrepresentative.

Please do not approve this increase in our rates. This will negatively affect our community including, as mentioned, the significant numbers of retirees already affected by changes to benefits and low interest rates on retirement savings. The council should first and foremost be looking to improve financial management and reduce wastage. As the council expects to hold surplus funds of around 18 million at EOFY, a rate rise of this size cannot possibly be justified.