

**Report 01.724**  
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Report to the Wellington Regional Council  
from Lloyd Bezett, Policy Analyst, Council Secretariat

## **Local Government (Rating) Bill - Submission**

### **1. Purpose**

To consider a submission on the Local Government (Rating) Bill.

### **2. Background**

A review of the Rating Powers Act 1988 has resulted in this Bill. A copy of the Explanatory Note to the Bill is attached at **Attachment 1**.

The Bill has been referred to the Environment and Local Government Select Committee and while submissions officially closed on 26 September 2001, the Select Committee Office has agreed to the Council making a late submission. A draft submission is attached at **Attachment 2**.

### **3. Comment**

The need for amending legislation was brought into focus with the enactment of the Local Government Amendment (No.3) Act 1996. Regional councils were forced, by the limited funding tools available to them, to fund activities in manners that did not best reflect the benefits derived by different classes of ratepayers.

This Council has long advocated that regional councils should be empowered to use the same rating powers as territorial authorities. This is provided for in the Bill. Whether or not new powers would be exercised is a matter of policy decision by this Council and other regional councils.

The Local Government (Rating) Bill makes some welcome changes by removing anomalies in the legislation and expanding the range of funding tools that may be used by all local authorities. However, the Bill would make a number of changes that

would add to the cost of collecting rates, eg. the requirement for all councils to maintain a rating database. The Bill also contains a vein of prescription which is contrary to the spirit of the more empowering revised Local Government Act, which is currently being prepared.

**4. Recommendation**

*That the attached submission to the Environment and Local Government Select Committee on the Local Government (Rating) Bill be approved.*

Report prepared by:

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