



MEDIA RELEASE

20 April 2026

Mayor backs national push to restore fair funding for local government

Balranald Shire Mayor, Cr Louie Zaffina, has backed a national campaign calling on the Commonwealth to restore Financial Assistance Grants to at least one per cent of total taxation revenue.

The campaign, led by the Country Mayors Association of NSW, is supported by Local Government NSW and the Australian Local Government Association under the message: *"Invest in us so we can invest in them."*

Mayor Zaffina said the issue goes to the sustainability of rural and regional councils.

"Local government is the level closest to the community. We maintain roads, deliver water and sewer services, manage waste, and provide essential infrastructure," he said.

"Over many years, Financial Assistance Grants have been eroded. What was once one per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue has effectively been cut almost in half."

Mayor Zaffina said while councils can access Federal programs, they are typically project-based and do not support core service delivery.

"You can't run a council on one-off grants. Maintaining services and planning for growth requires stable, predictable funding," he said. "In places like Balranald, where we face the tyranny of distance, low population density, and growing infrastructure demands, the funding gap is clear."

Council will support the campaign through community engagement and direct advocacy to Federal decision-makers.

"This is a practical campaign about ensuring communities have the resources they need to thrive," Mayor Zaffina said.

"We're not asking for anything extraordinary, just a fair share so councils can continue delivering for their communities."

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