

# PETER DRAPER

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR TAMWORTH

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Draper to meet with Health Minister as community rallies against health service merger**

*June 21 2004*

Member for Tamworth Peter Draper will meet with the NSW Health Minister, Morris Iemma, within hours of a public rally protesting the proposed merger of the New England and Hunter area health services.

While hundreds of protestors are expected to converge in Tamworth's Bicentennial Park tomorrow, Mr Draper said he would be able to convey the depth and strength of community opposition to the proposal directly to the Minister.

"There is still a great deal of confusion in the community due to the lack of information coming from the Minister's office, but after tomorrow I'm hopeful the situation will become a little clearer," Mr Draper said.

Mr Draper said the meeting, which would be held in Parliament House at 4pm, would give he and Member for Northern Tablelands MP Richard Torbay an opportunity to discuss the reasons for and against a merger as well as the potential impact it would have on local services.

Mr Draper has been highly critical of the fact the Government has undertaken to merge the health services without conducting a proper assessment of the impact or any public consultation.

"I'm hopeful the Minister will defer a decision at least until the Department examines the full impact of the proposal on the delivery of health services, the level of employment and the community at large," Mr Draper said.

"This would have to include consulting directly with stakeholders and the communities of the New England north west," he said.

**End Release**

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