

# PETER DRAPER

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR TAMWORTH

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Draper urges community members to sign petition in protest to health service merger**

*June 8 2004*

A petition opposing the merger between the New England Area Health Service and the Hunter Area Health Service is available to sign at the Tamworth office of Member for Tamworth Peter Draper.

Mr Draper is encouraging community members to contact the office for a copy of the petition, which can be circulated, or to sign the petition by dropping into 13 Fitzroy St.

Mr Draper and Member for Northern Tablelands Richard Torbay held three meetings with the NSW Health Minister Morris Iemma and his senior staff last week to discuss the Government's proposal to merge the area health services.

The MP's asked the Minister's policy advisors to compile a comprehensive list of positive merger outcomes for the NEAHS so the New England North West community could make an informed decision over the future of its health service.

"It's still not clear exactly which services, if any, and which jobs will be affected, however, Mr Torbay and I are drafting a list of the disadvantages and what we perceive would be the merger's impact on the community to present to the Minister.

"We plan to exchange the information at a meeting with Mr Iemma after Parliament resumes in two weeks," he said.

"In a conversation with the Minister's Senior Policy Advisor earlier today, I was once again informed that to date, no decisions have been made regarding the proposed merger."

"People have been faxing, emailing and sending letters to my office and I encourage them to continue doing so. Hopefully this petition will further reflect the depth of community opposition to the merger and its' concern over the complete absence of consultation in the process," he said.

**End Release**

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