

I am a member of the Nelson Residents Association. The issues discussed in the draft report have concerned us for many years. Some of my colleagues will be addressing different aspects of the report.

The report overlooks fundamental excesses by local government that have contributed to the crisis in funding. Twelve years ago the current mayor of Nelson came to council. Since that time my rates have increased 300%. However, much of the urgent infrastructure work that should have been attended to has been neglected, resulting in a backlog of over \$40 million. The money was thrown away by council on non-essential projects with huge cost overruns. and entertainment. This year alone, Nelson council has increased its funding for entertainment by nearly 50%.

As someone retired on a fixed income, these rate increases with no real justification have meant that I must divert money from medical expenses and other essentials to rate increases each year.

The fundamental recommendation of the Commission should be for councils to stop wasting money. There are a few councils that still have a sense of responsibility when it comes to finance, but most use public money like a credit card with no limits.

Incidentally, the recommendation regarding proximity to infrastructure projects that supposedly benefit ratepayers, is concerning. I live next to an imminent main bicycle artery that Nelson council will soon build. I am not able to use a bicycle anymore due to an accident, but under the recommendations of the commission my rates would increase even more due to my proximity to this artery which is no use to me.