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MEDIA RELEASE

COURTS LEGITIMATE LINE OF DEFENCE FOR COUNCILS

The President of the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC), Mayor Pat Reilly of Willoughby Council, has condemned the Planning Minister's recent calls for Ku-ring-gai Mayor Nick Ebbeck to resign as 'inappropriate, unprofessional and unwarranted'.

The Planning Minister, Frank Sartor, had called for Mr Ebbeck's resignation following the dismissal of a court case Ku-ring-gai Council had bought against the Minister over his appointment of a Planning Panel to oversee the rezoning and planning of six town centres in the Ku-ring-gai region.

Mr Reilly also defended the role of Mayor Ebbeck in challenging the Minister's actions stating that 'the law courts are one of the few defences left to councils in the face of inappropriate state intervention or the creation of unfair legislation or policies'.

He added that many councils in New South Wales were having problems with the arbitrary decisions of the Planning Minister and the complex, rushed, and confusing changes to planning legislation the Minister has moved through parliament.

Mr Reilly stated that 'councils need to represent their communities fearlessly and stand up for what they believe is right. If the community does not agree with their actions they always have recourse to the ballot box at the appropriate time'.

Mr Reilly also said that there were not many mayors who had met with Minister Sartor and not been outraged by this arrogance in respect to community feeling. 'I hope that when the Premier does reshuffle his cabinet he takes Mr Sartor's recent history on board' he concluded.

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