

13 July 2010

The Hon. Steve Whan MP  
Member for Monaro  
110-112 Monaro Street  
Queanbeyan NSW 2620

Dear Mr Whan,

**Re: Bega District News Friday 02 July 2010**

I refer to comments attributed to you that were published on page 2 of the Bega District News on Friday 02 July 2010, in which you said, among other things: "I will continue to support building a new hospital even though that task is made more difficult by the constant political point scoring from the opposition and short-sighted campaigns being run by some supporters of Pambula hospital".

It is apparent your reference to "some supporters of Pambula hospital" includes our association and its members.

We reject in the strongest terms and resent your unjustifiable and indefensible attribution of blame to our association and its members/supporters for the failure of the NSW Government to diligently pursue construction of the proposed new regional hospital in Bega. Ours is a not-for-profit and apolitical association whose members/supporters are of diverse political persuasions and which, quite frankly, are neither of interest to anyone else in the association nor relevant to the association's objectives.

Our objectives include securing superior health services in the Bega Valley Shire as well seeking the restoration of services previously downgraded or withdrawn by the Greater Southern Area Health Service. In short, our association and its members/supporters are united and unequivocally support the proposed new regional hospital, but at the same time have trenchantly criticised the NSW Health Service and various Health Ministers for running down Pambula District Hospital before the new regional hospital becomes a reality, as such action is manifestly irresponsible to say the least.

The position taken by our association clearly mirrors the strong public sentiment that was expressed by 22, 062 signatories to a petition taken within the Bega Valley Shire that was presented to the NSW Parliament in March 2009. The weight of public opinion cannot be capriciously dismissed or ignored, especially when the shire's population is about 31, 000.

Another issue of very profound concern is that your comments have not encouraged reasoned and informed public debate but needlessly inflamed the passions of some constituents, especially in the northern part of the shire, and

created antagonism towards those in the southern half. Your comments have been less than helpful and are clearly not befitting a minister of the crown. We believe you owe it to the constituents of the Bega Valley Shire to issue a public apology.

Yours sincerely,

Geoff Dove

**President**

**Save Our Hospital Inc.**