



27 August 2018

Mayor and Councillors  
[Council]

By email: [emails]

Dear Elected Official,

## REQUEST FOR COMMITMENT ON REMUNERATION FREEZE

Last week, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern froze the pay of Members of Parliament in an acknowledgement that the Government (and MPs) cannot keep taking pay hikes while saying there is no more money for teachers, nurses and other New Zealanders struggling to make ends meet.

At the same time, ratepayers across the country are told to expect rate hikes averaging 50 percent over the next decade – and that's without including new charges such as regional fuel taxes and increased waste levies. Across New Zealand, Council rates are going up many times the rate of inflation and post-tax income growth. That means *your ratepayers* (our members) are having to cut back due to decisions made around your Council table.

As an example of an unjustified pay hike, Dave Cull – Mayor of Dunedin and President of Local Government New Zealand – has just received a 5.7% pay hike. Ironically, Mr Cull has publicly defended his fattened pay packet on the basis of being a Mayor "full time". But we see Mr Cull in Wellington (at LGNZ) every other week. He is remunerated for the LGNZ role separately.

Remuneration around the Council chamber should reflect the pressures currently faced by ratepayers. We are asking every Mayor, and Councillor, to follow the Prime Minister's lead, and announce a freeze on their pay.

***Will you acknowledge that many of your ratepayers are struggling, and follow Jacinda Ardern's leadership and freeze your own pay until Council elections next year?***

Aside from reducing future expenses, this measure would incentivise elected members to more carefully manage ratepayer money and send a strong signal to the public that you (and your Council) are committed to good fiscal management and prudence.

This pay freeze would not require you to overrule the Remuneration Authority – it just requires you personally choosing not to accept increased remuneration this year by instructing your Council's Chief Executive to return the additional remuneration to the Council's consolidated fund.

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We have made this easy to do with the **attached** form.

Please let us know if you will stand with ratepayers and take this step. We will be publicly identifying and welcoming those elected officials who take this step.

If you are not willing to, what is your justification for continuing to accept salary hikes while asking ratepayers to tighten their own belts to pay for your Council's significantly increased costs?

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,  
**New Zealand Taxpayers' Union Inc.**



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*PS. If you are ever in Wellington, drop in and meet us. We represent our 36,000 members and supporters fighting for Lower Taxes, Less Waste, and More Transparency. Our offices are just above Local Government New Zealand and while they're all paid better, our (non-ratepayer funded) coffee is better than Dave's.*

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