



Submission for Co Design

The Aboriginal Catholic Ministry is committed to promoting reconciliation through shared understanding, truth-telling, wellbeing and pastoral support of Aboriginal people in the living of our faith and cultural expression of spirit. We work through authentic partnerships by advocating on behalf of Aboriginal peoples living within the Archdiocese of Sydney. It is from this place of support that we provide our submission regarding the recently released co design models for a voice to Parliament that is enshrined in the constitution.

The Aboriginal Catholic Ministry supports the two hundred and fifty First Nations People who worked on and presented the Uluru Statement from the Heart whilst acknowledging the many First Nations people who felt distanced from the process. **The representative voice must reflect the views and experiences of varied demographic and geographical communities.**

We strongly support First Nations Peoples' right to a say in the decision-making processes that inform laws, policies and programs that affect their everyday lives. This needs to be a fair and practical reform that will **make a real difference for and have measurable outcomes in 'Closing the Gap' for First Nations Peoples.** In this spirit we support the following recommendations:

1. The Government must honour its election commitment to a referendum once the model for a voice has been settled.
2. Enable legislation for the Voice must be passed after a referendum has been held in the next term of Parliament.
3. The membership model for the National Voice must ensure previously unheard Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the same chance of being selected as established leadership figures.