

I make this submission to the Indigenous Voice Co-Design process, as a non-Indigenous parent to two proud and deadly Bidjara and Torres Strait Islander boys. I have been given the greatest privilege of being able to walk alongside my children and our extended family and am lucky enough to see my children grow up strong in their culture and their sense of self. It has had a profound impact on my life and started me on a journey of reflection, truth-hearing and consciousness of how I get to walk through society and the injustice of that privilege whilst I walk on Aboriginal land. I fervently believe this is a journey I and every Australian should be on. It will be a life long journey for me to walk alongside my children and continue to learn and deeply listen. I strongly call for an Indigenous Voice to be enshrined in the Constitution and for a Voice to be established at local, regional and national levels. I know without a doubt that in order for change to occur, a First Nations Voice must be at the heart of decision making for First Nations People. Our First Nations young people deserve to have a place for their voice, and space to proudly claim and celebrate the wonder of their culture and the achievements of their People. The Uluru Statement speaks to what a remarkable opportunity we have as a nation to enrich all of our lives and protect and enrich the future of this country. It says “when we have power over our destiny our children will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country”. We have an opportunity as a nation to take the first, very important and long overdue steps towards hearing the truth of our past, acknowledging the rightful place of First Nations Peoples and being blessed by the gift of a Voice which carries the knowledge and wisdom of the oldest continuous culture on Earth.