



Dear Co-Design Body

Submission for Co-design process

I am a 49 year old woman who lives in Adelaide with my husband and two daughters. I have a degree in Aboriginal Studies and Primary Education. I am currently studying a Bachelor of Nursing. I have had a wonderful career as a teacher working mainly in Aboriginal education and specialising in Aboriginal language. I grew up in country South Australia. My cousin was adopted from the APY lands in the late 1960s. I grew up with her, and her premature death, was the motivator for a life long concern for Aboriginal issues.

*Why do you think the Uluru Statement from the Heart is important?*

For me, The Uluru statement from the heart is so important, because it is the combined voice of our Indigenous leaders, explaining once again, as their ancestors have done before them, why their people need to be recognised in this country. That Indigenous people have to ask for this simple human right is so disappointing to me. That they have not been listened to is shameful. The Uluru statement from the Heart is a pathway to a more harmonious Australia that recognises its First Nations people and their rights to a voice.

*Why do you think it's important to enshrine the Voice to Parliament in the Constitution, rather than include it only in legislation?*

It is important to enshrine the Voice to Parliament in the Constitution because this is what has been collectively endorsed by First Nations leaders. The constitution provides legitimacy. Through the process of a referendum The Voice to Parliament will have the endorsement of the Australian people and cannot be ignored as it could be through legislation alone.

*Why is it important for Indigenous people to have a say in the matters that affect them?*

For too many years we have spent countless millions on programs to solve the issues that affect Indigenous Australia, but too often these dollars have been spent without the input, advice, knowledge and innovation of the people for whom the money is intended. And for too many years very little has changed. The success of models such as Justice Reinvestment show how beneficial community led solutions can be. Indigenous people know what will work for their own communities. They must be given a say in those matters that affect their lives, so that money is spent wisely and positive change can be made.

*How could a Voice to Parliament improve the lives of your community?*

A Voice to Parliament will enable Indigenous people to have a say on the structural change that is needed to impact the lives of Indigenous Australians. Change can finally be targeted to the needs of the people, as advised by the people.

We must achieve a Voice to Parliament enshrined in the Constitution because we must now listen to the needs of Indigenous Australia and make structural change according to

those needs. We must now move forward as a nation, recognising the unique position of First Nations people and their right to be heard.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.