

Submission regarding the Indigenous Voice

I call on the government to adopt an Indigenous Voice enshrined in the Australian Constitution. It is critically important that the existence of the Voice is unable to be snuffed out, and Indigenous voices silenced, by legislation in the way it has been in the past. We must consider what is a fair and practical change that will make a meaningful difference to the lives of Indigenous people, and a Voice enshrined in the Constitution will do that. The government made an electoral commitment to a referendum on this Constitutional change, and Australians expect the government to fulfil that commitment. Many of my family and friends support the Uluru Statement from the Heart including the Voice being enshrined in the Constitution. This is an important opportunity to unify the Australian people.

A Voice enshrined in the Constitution will give it the certainty and continuity needed to help over the long term to address the multi-faceted challenges facing Indigenous people in Australia through advice to government, without being subjected to political changes based on populism and the electoral cycle.

A call upon the government to hold a referendum on the Voice in the next term of Parliament, and if successful, to pass the enabling legislation in the same term.

One of the critical aspects of the Voice is that the method of determining the membership of the Voice must ensure that previously unheard Indigenous people have an equal chance of becoming members of the Voice alongside established Indigenous leadership figures. There are many emerging and lower profile leaders among the Indigenous community and they have deep understanding of the challenges that Indigenous people face in their lives, and importantly, what is needed to address them.

Thank you.

