

Individual Submission to Indigenous Voice Co-Design Process

Support for a VOICE to Parliament, enshrined in the Constitution

Alex Musgrove
Maianbar
Sydney NSW 2230

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my support for the creation of a Representative Advisory Voice to Parliament as detailed in the Interim Report on the Indigenous Voice Co-Design Process. I am writing to take the opportunity to offer comments on the Interim Report on the design of this National Voice.

I thank the work of the Advisory Team in creating the Interim Report to the Australian Government on the Indigenous Voice Co-Design Process.

I am an advocate for a Constitutional Amendment that enshrines a National Advisory First Nations Voice that is representative of voices across national, regional and local communities.

Whilst Constitutional enshrinement was outside of the terms of reference of the co-design team, I believe Constitutional enshrinement is needed to ensure the Voice's stability, certainty and flexibility.

I stand with 86% of the Australian general community¹, and in solidarity with 91% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples,² who believe it is important for a representative Indigenous Body to be established to share the views of Indigenous Australians regarding Indigenous affairs and policies.

I support a call for a Referendum, so this can be Constitutionally enshrined.

Constitutional reform is important to me because as a non-indigenous Australian I am committed to the rights of the Indigenous peoples of this country, and I acknowledge with gratitude the work of those involved in the Co-design Process.

Those of us who have come to this land from the time of the arrival of the First Fleet until now must respect the descendants of those who have lived here for 65,000 years and more.

Therefore, I affirm the Uluru Statement from the Heart with its call for a national Voice to Parliament, to be enshrined in the Australian Constitution; I also support its call for a Makarrata Commission to supervise agreement making and truth telling of our shared

¹ Reconciliation Australia, *2020 Australian Reconciliation Barometer*, p. 14. https://www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/australian_reconciliation_barometer_2020_-full-report_web.pdf

² Ibid.

history. My hope would be that whatever model is put in place gives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people the capacity to participate in decision-making in matters that concern them.

I do not believe that a legislated Voice would provide the stability that a Voice enshrined in the Australian Constitution would provide.

I therefore ask the Australian Government

1. to take a model for a Voice to Parliament, to a referendum and
2. that legislation for the Voice be passed after the referendum, and
3. finally, that the membership be such that voices at all levels of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are heard.

1. I request that the Federal government honours its 2019 electoral promise to take a model for a First Nations VOICE to Parliament, to a referendum.
2. The National VOICE *must* be represented by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to ensure self-determination. Following calls from the Uluru Statement from the Heart, I advocate for a Makaratta Commission to supervise the creation of the advisory First Nations Voice.
3. The National VOICE member model must be a model that ensures ALL Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island grassroot voices are heard from every level.

95% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and 94% of the general community believe it is important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to have a say in matters that affect them.³ The creation of the Voice would therefore reflect the popularity of the motion and the priorities of both the general Australian public and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

This is a crucial step in Australia's national journey of reconciliation, and Constitutional enshrinement of a First Nations Voice to Parliament would enact a cultural change of Australian identity that honours the place of Australia's First Peoples, and would empower them to have influence the decisions that govern their lives.

Supporter,

Alex Musgrove

Signed

30 March 2021

³ Reconciliation Australia, *2020 Australian Reconciliation Barometer*, p. 62. https://www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/australian_reconciliation_barometer_2020_-full-report_web.pdf