

## **Indigenous Voice – Submission**

I am writing to make a personal submission to the Indigenous Voice Co-Design Process.

I am a supporter of the Uluru Statement from the Heart. This statement eloquently articulates the desire of First Nations people throughout Australia for recognition, through substantive constitutional change and structural reform.

My family and I were extremely privileged to have witnessed the dialogue process that led to the making of the Uluru Statement from the Heart from close quarters. This Statement was born of an unprecedented deliberative, consultative process which enabled First Nations people to voice their desire for recognition, for voice, treaty and truth.

I support a Voice to Parliament, enshrined in the Australian Constitution. We must ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are heard in decision-making processes about the laws and policies that affect them.

I also work in the community sector and know first-hand the ongoing impact of colonisation and dispossession on First Nations people every day.

A Voice to Parliament would commit our Parliament to engaging with the views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people before legislating and making decisions that affect them. This would improve Parliament's capacity to perform its functions effectively and to develop laws and policies that improve the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and hasten efforts towards substantive equality. A Voice would also benefit all Australians; as it would be an important mechanism towards enabling everyone in our country to better learn from and celebrate the rich and diverse cultures and knowledges of Australia's First Nations people.

The importance of a Voice to Parliament is such that it should be enshrined in our Constitution, protecting its existence and core function.

I am the mother of two teenage children, who are fierce advocates for equality and justice. I want them to inherit a nation that will acknowledge that it is built on the suffering of First Nations people. I want them to live in a country that has enshrined in its Constitution a mechanism through which First Nations people can speak to Parliament and influence the laws and policies that directly impact their communities.

It is time for substantive recognition of First Nations peoples in our Constitution through an enshrined Voice to Parliament. I wish to walk together with First Nations People to a better future.

**Kate Temby**