

**Submission to Indigenous Voice Co-Design Process**  
**Support for a VOICE to Parliament, enshrined in the Constitution**

I want to first thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the issue of a VOICE to parliament. Although this is primarily a matter for the privileging of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, it is an important step for all of Australia to move toward reconciliation and as such a valuable opportunity for non-Indigenous Australians to voice support for change.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have come forward in agreement on how to provide much needed reconciliation between the First Peoples of Australia and those who since have been the beneficiaries of Australia's colonisation in the ULURU STATEMENT. They ask for VOICE, TREATY and TRUTH that we might move toward a more just and fair conception of Australia.

However, a VOICE to just government is not good enough; without constitutional enshrinement there is no assurance that a First Nations Voice will be truly heard in a country that still prioritises the economic and imperial objectives of beneficiaries of colonisation at the expense of Australia's First Nations. Token consultation is not enough. The Government must not default on its election commitment to a referendum. **The Federal government must honour its promise to take a model for a 'First Nations Voice to Parliament' as soon as possible.** When the law and the government fail Australia's First Nations, it reveals a lack of concern and sensitivity by the governing authorities who more often than not are the ongoing beneficiaries of original colonisation. Yet as much as the disadvantage and marginalisation of Indigenous peoples in Australian policy may be a moral failing of governments to recognise Indigenous rights, it is a systemic problem that results from a lack of concrete laws and institutionalised economic incentives that could otherwise include a First Nations Voice in Australian decision making.

It is time for the law and the constitution itself to change. **Legislation for the Voice must be passed in the next term after a referendum has been held.** For too long Australian and international law has been used directly and indirectly to perpetrate or allow the mistreatment of Australia's First Nations, from the false declaration of *Terra Nullius* to the Stolen Generation, to the ongoing disadvantage and displacement of Indigenous peoples with inadequate remediation and policy. It is time for the law and the constitution to be used *for* Australia's First Nations, instead of against them.

The only way to ensure that their rights and needs will be met is to enshrine their voice in the constitution, a necessary and requested first step in listening to the Voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the way they have nominated. **A membership model for the National Voice must also ensure that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from all parts of the country will be heard and have equal chance to be selected as leadership figures.**

Make straight the path for a fair, just, and reconciled Australia by constitutionally enshrining a voice to parliament.

Yours Sincerely,

Danielle Worton