

Anna Burchfield

Karrinyup, WA, 6018

To Co-Design Body

Submission for Co-design process

I am a non-indigenous woman from Boorloo (Western Australia), I was born in Ngambri (ACT). This is my first time making an official written statement to a committee in support of Indigenous Australians. I am a privileged, educated woman - I have a Degree in International Relations and P.R from Curtin University and a Master's Degree in Political Science from the University of Western Australia. I submit this statement as a private citizen, on behalf of myself. I work in Marketing for Advanced Personnel Management (APM).

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

It is vital for our Indigenous people to have a dedicated voice in Parliament, they are the oldest Indigenous culture in the world and we as white and non-Indigenous people are simply 'tourists' who claimed a sovereignty that was never ceded to us. This Statement is a logical and simple step.

*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 do this in the Constitution because the land we govern on and the land us non-Indigenous people claim to govern is their land. To do this in the Constitution will help undo the damage of the White Australia policy and the fact that Indigenous people were only acknowledged as human being in our Constitution in 1967. This process needs to come full circle. Simply putting this in legislation puts the notion of Indigenous Australians being the owners and custodians of Australia up for debate or discussion by predominantly white politicians. This should not be their decision, the ownership of Australia by Indigenous people is not up for debate or conjecture. Allowing predominantly white politicians to debate this would only serve the purpose of exposing more systemic racism and systems of inherent bias.

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

The visibility of Indigenous people would be incredibly beneficial for my community. I want to see more Indigenous representation in our State Parliaments too.

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

This is an important step to undo the damaging paternalism of the past. We non-Indigenous people cannot claim to know what is better for Indigenous people without consulting them. At some point we need to do differently to our ancestors, not simply continuing things because that was always how things were previously done. What has been done in the past has caused awful damage to generations of Indigenous people.

Yours sincerely,  
Anna Burchfield