

To Co-Design Body

Submission to Co-design process

I am a mother of three children, two of whom were born in London with the third born here in Wollongong. I work as a Professor of Atmospheric Chemistry at the University of Wollongong where I have had the privilege to get a glimpse into the wonders of the local Yuin culture through the Jindaola project.

The Uluru Statement from the Heart provides an opportunity for Australia to take a vital step forward in recognising its past, however painful, and working towards a future when it can celebrate its amazingly rich and powerful indigenous culture, making a better life for all its citizens.

A Voice to Parliament will foster greater understanding of the different cultures in Australia and help build a stronger and more coherent society for our children. Enshrining the Voice to Parliament in the Constitution will protect this overdue recognition of indigenous rights for future generations.

Australia can never be the true democracy that it aspires to be, until it recognises and empowers indigenous people to make decisions for themselves. History has shown us how little understanding our parliamentarians have of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities and how damaging this ignorance can be when decisions are made for and not by these communities.

It has been a real disappointment to see the Uluru Statement from the Heart being ignored these last few years. Let's make this important step towards embracing the rich culture of the First Australians and building a better future for us all.

Thank you for your consideration,

Helen Clare Murphy