

Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders peoples in the Australian Constitution and Changing the Constitution to stop Racial discrimination.

The following submission closely follows the Expert Panel and the Joint Select Committees' key proposals. There are some additions:

- (1) Section 25 of the Constitution be removed entirely. Australia should not, in this day and age, have the power to make discriminatory laws against any one using 'race' as a reason.
- (2) A preliminary statement of acknowledgement be placed in the Constitution recognising that the Australian continent was first occupied by Aboriginal and Torres State Islander peoples & that Aboriginal & Torres State Islanders have a continuing relationship with their lands and waters; that they have the right to have the continuing languages and heritage respected; that there is a need to secure the advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders into the future .
- (3) Section 51(xxvi) should be amended and the word 'race' removed and the words, 'power to make laws with respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders be inserted in its place, with the assurance that any new power could only be used for their advancement.
- (4) A guarantee that the Federal Parliament will not be able to discriminate against a people of any 'race' or cultural background, be legally included in the Constitution.
- (5) That the Constitution state that Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders have a proportion of seats in Parliament together with their own planning bodies to give advice to the Parliament.

The Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders share the common experience of colonisation and the purpose of this Constitutional change is an endeavour to ameliorate & reverse those effects. There has to be consideration & planning which takes into account that the Indigenous peoples comprise differing groups; they have multiple languages, cultures and needs & must not be regarded as if one size fits all.

The only way that this process of Recognition can deliver true benefit for the First Peoples of Australia is to provide a guarantee that they will have charge of ongoing financial capital: one per cent (1%) of GDP for instance, to enable them to decide & advance their future. Then they will finally have the opportunity to have some freedom.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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