

A VOICE TO PARLIAMENT

Families Australia celebrates more than 65,000 years of custodianship and connection to lands and sea country of First Nations people. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and pay our respects to Elders and Ancestors.

For millennia, First Nations people and communities have been nurturing children and young people through lore, kinship systems and the powerful cultural role of Elders.

European settlement of Australia profoundly disrupted the cultural, spiritual and physical connection between Traditional Owners and Custodians of this country and their land, water and community.

The 2017 Uluru Statement from the Heart is a national Indigenous consensus position on Indigenous constitutional recognition, developed through a convention of over 250 First Nations delegates. The Statement calls for the establishment of a 'First Nations Voice' to be codified and enshrined in the Australian Constitution.

A Voice to Parliament will provide a formal mechanism to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a direct say and provide advice to government on legislation and policies that affect them. Giving the Australian Government – all of us – the opportunity to make policies *with* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, rather than *for* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, a consultative process that will deliver meaningful structural change.

The wellbeing of First Nations families, children and young people is fundamental to the health and prosperity of this country. Enshrining a Voice to Parliament is a way to deliver fair, practical change for First Nations people and communities. As a part of Australia's reconciliation journey, it is a foundational element of Voice - Treaty – Truth.

Board endorsed February 2023

Families Australia's encourages all members to join us in supporting A Voice to Parliament by adopting this statement, leading conversations in your organisation, and getting involved in events within your community.

Further information and resources can be obtained from:

www.ulurustatement.org/the-statement

www.reconciliation.org.au/support-a-voice-to-parliament

www.yes23.com.au

<https://www.niaa.gov.au/indigenous-affairs/referendum-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-voice>

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