



30 April 2021

The Hon. Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Firstly, we acknowledge and pay respects to the past, present and future Custodians and Elders of this nation, and the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We are Uniting WA, a community services organisation operating on Noongar boodja, in the Perth metropolitan and south-west regions of Western Australia. Our work addresses the injustices and systemic disadvantages facing our communities' most-vulnerable populations. Our services include family and children's services, community housing, disability and mental health services and advocacy, homelessness services and reintegration support.

In our work, we witness the realities of systemic, institutionalised, racial disadvantage impacting First Nations people every single day. As you are aware, these realities are undeniably reflected within our justice, health, education and services systems and outcomes. Accordingly, our organisation whole-heartedly supports the Uluru Statement from the Heart's proposed changes to the constitution.

Tokenistic representation, report writing, investigations, and empty words and promises, have thus far dominated our country's collective efforts toward reconciliation. For this, frankly, we feel ashamed on an international scale.

It is time we acknowledge the truths of our history.

It is time to acknowledge the compounding injustice imposed on our First Nation's peoples through our ongoing inaction.

It is time to stop burdening Indigenous Australians with further cumulative trauma.

It is time to make constitutional changes that hold us accountable.

We recognise the discomfort of facing change, and in allowing the knowledge of different realities and systems of governance to be enacted. As the current system of governance continues to disproportionately disadvantage Indigenous Australians, there is simply no other option but to consider alternative possibilities that represent and benefit all Australians.

P 1300 663 298 | **F** 1300 663 528 | **ABN** 75 467 729 203 | GPO Box B74, Perth WA 6838 | unitingwa.org.au

Uniting WA respectfully acknowledges the Noongar people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we provide our services. We recognise their unique and spiritual connection to Country and waters. We value the oldest continuing culture in the world and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We believe the addition of Voice, enshrined within our constitution, will make way for revolutionary changes to the lives of thousands of people. The proposed amendments align with contemporary understandings in community development, placing emphasis on self-determination and capacity-building in order to affect change.

The efforts of Australians towards reconciliation must not continue to be tarnished by political squabbling. We ask that you prove there is value to your election promise of a referendum. Further, we call for you to enable legislation in support of the National Voice. Your active commitment to this process will make a bold statement of your Government's dedication to reconciliation through necessary processes of decolonisation.

Voice. Treaty. Truth.

Thank you for your consideration of this submission, we look forward to your reply, and to positive action from your government.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly regarding this submission, by email on amanda.hunt@unitingwa.org.au.

Yours sincerely



Amanda Hunt
Chief Executive Officer

on behalf of the Uniting WA team who participated in the Uluru Statement from the Heart workshop on 14 April 2021.