

# Awakening Democracy

CAPaD – the Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2020

Dear members and friends

In what can only be described as a horrendous start to the year in much of Australia, experiencing our new climate, we can only reflect on what this means for our democracy. While we have experienced pain and loss, we have also seen what people can do when faced with disaster, pulling together spontaneously and through the valued community fabric of organisations we have built over decades (the RFS, the Red Cross).

One of the few glimmers of hope is that many are connecting inaction on climate change and the corruption of public governance with the parlous state of our democracy. For instance see [Kathryn Murphy's article](#).

What part can you play?

CAPaD focuses on democracy in the ACT because we think getting a better democracy here is important and will show how it's done. Better democracy at the national level can also drive change in the ACT. We can have influence through our three MHRs and two senators. While the Federal election is at least 2 years off, what can we now do to help them represent us and then hold them accountable for that?

One immediate issue is **Zali Steggall's [Climate Change \(National Framework for Adaptation and Action\) Bill 2020](#)** proposing strong national plans to adapt to increasing impacts of climate change, to reduce and mitigate its risks and to leverage its opportunities. Will our Federal members support the conscience vote and vote for the Bill? Time is tight on this. We invite you to contact ACT MPs and Senators to ask them how they will vote on it. Then, we'd really like to hear from you what they said so we can put that on our website for others to read. (See contacts below)

## **CAPaD - making change in 2020**

Just as reminder: the plan for 2020 is [on our website](#).

Please get involved in one of our [action groups](#) and help get a democracy where our elected representatives work for us to protect and improve the public good!

## **What we have been doing**

See our [piece in ACTCOSS journal](#) about CAPaD's thoughts on more accountable representation.

## **What's coming up**

The 2020 ACT Election on October 17<sup>th</sup>. CAPaD wants citizens to set clear expectations for our representatives and to vote for candidates who commit to meet those if they are elected. Participatory democracy will improve the way the ACT is governed so that we get the type of city we want to live in and for our children to inherit. We will be running an updated Candidate Statement process. More details as they become available.

## **New stuff to read and look at**

Australia REMADE. CAPaD is a supporter. They are inspiring transformation. [Here is a piece](#) that is informing how CAPaD will work this year.

## What else is new (in Australian and the World)

### Making governments open.

Australia is part of the international Open Government project. We are developing our third action Plan and they [want citizen input](#).

“An open government is one that works hard to strengthen democracy, is transparent, accountable, empowers communities, is respectful of its citizens, and ensures people can meaningfully participate in government decision-making and designing policies and services.”

This site also sets out the 15 domains for government to be more open and accountable.

*From your committee*

**Contact us:** [secretary@canberra-alliance.org.au](mailto:secretary@canberra-alliance.org.au)

**Keep up to date:** <https://canberra-alliance.org.au/>

**Share ideas:** [Twitter](#) @CAPADACT

**Find us on Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1487360858250888/>

© 2020 Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy (CAPaD). All rights reserved.

**CAPaD** - *Awakening Democracy*

The Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy