

## **STATEMENT SUPPORTING THE INDIGENOUS VOICE TO PARLIAMENT**

The Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy (CAPaD) supports the full implementation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart. The Voice to Parliament is the first step and CAPaD supports its enshrinement in the Constitution.

CAPaD is committed to values which include: equity, inclusive prosperity, justice, democratic outlook and practice, respect for all, diversity, non-partisan approaches and wide accountability.

In the spirit of these values we accept the gift of the Uluru Statement from Australia's Indigenous peoples.

CAPaD recognises the unique place Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders hold in Australia's ecosystems and society. We recognise the fact of colonization and the impact that has had on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their livelihoods and wellbeing. We recognise the legacy of failed projects and programs to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing and accept that this failure is a consequence of a failure to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander input to decisions made for them.

CAPaD believes democracy requires that people who are affected by decisions need to participate in making them. The Voice to Parliament ensures that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a way to meaningfully participate in informing the decisions that are made about them.

Enshrining parliament's capacity to establish the Voice in the Constitution will provide constitutional permanence of the principle to recognize and listen to Indigenous people and ensures it is protected from the vagaries of politics. The Voice will provide avenues of engagement in Parliamentary processes by Australia's first peoples that do not exist in the currently established institutions and organisations.

A Yes vote in the referendum is a step towards a more unified Australia. We encourage everyone to open their hearts and minds to this invitation and to appreciate its significance for all Australians, and especially First Nations people in Australia.