

Statement

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier



Sunday, 15 October 2023

JOINT STATEMENT ON VOICE

We know that a lot of First Nations people will be hurting today.

We know that for many Australians, the pain they feel will linger – and for others, it may never fade at all.

To First Nations people, we say this clearly: Victorians respect you and your culture.

We want a better future for you.

We want a better future for your communities.

We want a better future for your children.

And we want a better future for the generations to come.

The Voice was intended to be a way to hear what First Nations people have to say, and work to build a better future – together.

We can all get behind that principle.

Australians have decided that the Commonwealth approach to change the Constitution – in this particular way – was not the right way to go.

There is one truth we know to be self-evident: when Aboriginal Victorians thrive, we're all the stronger for it.

Four years ago, we had an election where every Aboriginal Victorian got the opportunity to pick their representatives. From those elections, the Victorian First People's Assembly was set up.

This year, we had our second round of elections. Aboriginal Victorians put their faith in the process – the doubling of voters on the Assembly roll is testament to that.

It's a model with bipartisan support. It has proven to be an effective way for Aboriginal Victorians to get to have a say, and for us to work together towards reconciliation.

We have a lot more to do, of course – in health, education, employment, housing and justice.

We'll keep working towards a stronger, fairer future for Aboriginal Victorians – led by, shaped by and driven by Aboriginal Victorians.

And at all times, we'll remain in awe of the extraordinary strength, resilience, and survival of First Nations people across this country.

Jacinta Allan
Premier of Victoria

Natalie Hutchins
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples

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