

## ***Media Release***

### **Call to action for political parties on Indigenous representation**

Leaders of political parties should actively encourage more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to get involved in their party according to a Queensland parliamentary committee.

This is one of the key recommendations of the *Hands on Parliament* report tabled by the Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee in the Queensland Parliament today.

The committee looked at a variety of strategies to enhance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' participation in democratic processes, including establishing dedicated seats in the Parliament and a separate Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Assembly.

"People had strong but divergent views about whether there should be special mechanisms to directly enhance participation. In the absence of strong support, particularly from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, the committee could not recommend that such mechanisms be implemented at this stage," says Karen Struthers MP, Chair of the committee.

"Apart from an enhanced role for political parties, the committee was told that civics and voter education for Indigenous people are necessary to enhance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' participation in democratic processes," says Ms Struthers.

As a result of views put forward in consultation the committee also makes recommendations about: formal recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' status as the first peoples of Queensland; programs to enhance Indigenous peoples' participation in local government; and the appointment of Parliamentary Indigenous Liaison Officers to provide advice to the Parliament and its committees.

"I urge all people to read the report and to take personal and collective action to ensure that the issues examined by the committee remain on the public agenda. The committee itself will monitor the effect of its recommendations" says Ms Struthers.

**Ms Struthers is available for interviews on 0417 733 702. For background information, contact Kerryn Newton at the committee secretariat on 3406 7909.**



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The Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee is a committee of the Queensland Parliament with a broad range of law reform responsibilities. The committee is established under the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*.