



Speech by

LINDA LAVARCH

STATE MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH

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REPUBLIC

Mrs LAVARCH (Kurwongbah—ALP) (10.22 a.m.): In the lead-up to the Federation referendum 100 years ago, Australians from all walks of life placed on public record why they would be voting "Yes" to Australia becoming a nation. On 6 November, Australians will go to the polls to decide two crucial questions about our national identity. Today I want to place on public record why I will be voting "Yes" to both questions.

On the question of whether the Australian Constitution should be altered to insert a preamble, I will be voting "Yes" because the preamble seeks to encapsulate the Australian condition into our ultimate legal document—something that is sorely missing at present. It highlights the unifying values, achievements and aspirations of our nation by, amongst other things, honouring indigenous Australians, recognising the contribution of immigrants, upholding equality of opportunity for all and noting the national spirit which binds us together. And contrary to public belief, it does not include the word "mateship". The other question, of course, is the question of becoming a republic—an independent nation. This is a question of utmost importance to our national identity and our future. For the fundamental reason that it is time that we had an Australian as our head of state instead of a foreign monarch, and that by becoming a republic we will truly be the independent nation that we are in spirit, I will be voting "Yes".

I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to the member for Moggill, the Leader of the Liberal Party, who has been the only person on that side of the House to have the courage to stand up and support the "Yes" case. I have his "Yes" badge—his badge of honour. It is the last one left. I acknowledge the member for Noosa and the member for Tablelands, who sought "Yes" badges. Where is the member for Noosa? And to all of those members on that side of the House who have told me in private that they are supporting a "Yes" case, I say, "Speak up. Do not keep it to yourselves. Get out and say it." They can start by signing the Founders Book at 1 o'clock today in the old Chamber.
