




Speech By
Corrine McMillan

MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 29 November 2022

MOTION

Voice to Parliament

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (12.15 pm): I am so proud to rise to support the motion of the Premier to see the implementation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full, including a constitutionally enshrined voice to our national parliament, and I am proud to be part of a Labor government that will deliver this constitutional change and structural reform in this country.

In 2011 I was proud to be one of the first, if not the first, principal in this state to introduce Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school captains as part of the student leadership team at my school. First Nations children made up 25 per cent of my student population at that time and they deserved a voice. I understand the power of leadership—my leadership and the leadership of my students—to challenge beliefs, values and attitudes and the opportunities leaders have to alter the path of students' lives and to improve their life outcomes. When we empower others by giving them a voice we publicly challenge racist stereotypes, conscious and unconscious racist bias and when we lead we importantly determine and share our deepest values. When we afford all a voice we afford all the opportunities assured to white Australia.

Leading the introduction and implementation of the Uluru statement will afford all people in this country the opportunity to deeply reflect on their own values and how these values, attitudes and beliefs are shaped. For those of us on this side of the House, we acknowledge the social construct of power. We understand how power is constructed, inferred and assumed. For the same reasons that I badged the first two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student leaders in my school back in 2011, the Albanese Labor government will introduce and implement the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

For tens of thousands of years our First Nations peoples have been treated as second-class citizens for no other reason than for the colour of their skin. The world's oldest continuing living culture, our First Nations peoples have never been given the respect that they deserve simply because of the colour of their skin. I am ashamed of our past and the actions of those forebears in positions of power, namely the white and the middle-class privileged, which make up a considerable part of this chamber. I am ashamed of our history as a country, and we all should be.

I led schools as a principal for 13 years and whilst I worked tirelessly and strategically to improve the educational outcomes of my First Nations students, and can proudly share that every First Nations student in my schools received a Queensland Certificate of Education, I am ashamed by the socio-economic outcomes, the health outcomes, the educational outcomes and the incarceration rates of our First Nations people, especially our children. As a principal I got tired of visiting my children in prison. I support this motion.