



Speech By  
**Michael Healy**


**MEMBER FOR CAIRNS**

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Record of Proceedings, 29 November 2022

**MOTION**

**Voice to Parliament**

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (12.03 pm): This motion that the House supports the implementation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full, including a constitutionally enshrined voice to our national parliament, is extremely important for the future of our nation and it says so much about who we are. I am concerned by the level of debate by some in this contribution and I am astounded that some have made no effort to even read the document. It is fundamental to us as a nation and as we move forward as a people.

The Nationals' announcement that it opposes a Voice to Parliament is incredibly disappointing and holds Australia back. A Voice to Parliament gives the Australian government the opportunity to make policies with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rather than for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This is part of a process which we have been going through since we invaded this country. A Voice to Parliament gives many opportunities. Current policy-making does not have a systemic process for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to provide advice, meaning that the policy is often made for them, as I said, as opposed to with them. This is about a process of further engagement, so Senator Matt Canavan tweeting that 'the Voice is all about more jobs for bureaucrats in Canberra, not solutions for Indigenous Australians' is not just insulting; it is patronising and it is paternalistic.

**Mrs Mullen:** He was a bureaucrat.

**Mr HEALY:** Yes, so coming from a bureaucrat I find that even more entertaining. Noel Pearson's comments in relation to the Nationals leader's—proud little David; sorry, David Littleproud—announcement are absolutely spot-on. He said that the Nationals had 'foisted the mantle of leadership on a boy' of Littleproud, whom he also described as a 'kindergarten' child and incapable of leadership that is necessary for the country and for his party. He added, 'I really think the National Party is writing itself off for the future,' as it appears to have done in this chamber. What is the Queensland LNP's view? What is it going to do with a Voice to Parliament? Does it support the comments made by its colleagues David Littleproud and Matt Canavan? Is it going to write itself off for the future also? In my patch we have Warren Entsch, the member for Leichhardt. Warren Entsch recently made the statement—

My concern about a Voice to Parliament is a group of elitists will not represent the majority. You get a small group of individuals that hold out against the majority and it's generally about money.

That sounds very much like a particular party. It is absolutely remarkable and extremely disappointing to hear that. It is time for the Nationals and the Liberal Nationals opposite to make their position clear: do they support these atrocious comments of their federal Queensland colleagues or do they support a voice to federal parliament?