




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 29 November 2022

MOTION

Voice to Parliament

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (11.53 am): I am so proud to be supporting this motion today. I am so proud that it is a federal Labor government that will now take action. After years of inaction by those opposite federally, we are now as a nation progressing a constitutionally enshrined First Nations Voice to Parliament. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity.

I want to read from the Uluru Statement from the Heart. I cannot believe that there are members opposite who have not taken the time to even read it who stand up and are part of a debate, who let their party's council oppose it before even reading what it is about. As the Uluru Statement from the Heart says—

With substantive constitutional change and structural reform, we believe this ancient sovereignty can shine through as a fuller expression of Australia's nationhood.

We on this side of the House agree. We are proud to stand alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in working towards a better, fairer and more truthful Australia. I cannot understand why the LNP State Council and the Nationals will be on the wrong side of history on this. Why would the Leader of the Opposition stand up and be part of this debate and not say what he believes? Where does the Leader of the Opposition stand? What is the member for Broadwater's view? How did he vote at the LNP council and what is his position right now? It is not just that the Nationals and David Littleproud are now going to campaign against it; it is that the LNP here in Queensland are afraid to take a stand on anything.

It is pretty depressing when you long for the days of conservative leadership like John Howard, because at least he stood for something. At least he took a stand against the dinosaurs in his party—the sexist and racist attitudes of that party that allow them to take a vote opposing a constitutionally enshrined voice without even seeing the model. It is absolutely outrageous. We know that the member for Broadwater has form when it comes to not taking a stance on anything. He will not take a stance on quotas and getting more women into the parliament. He will not tell us their plans for abortion and a woman's right to choose. Now he will not say his own view or his party's view on a Voice to Parliament. On this side of the House we are so proud to stand alongside our First Nations people, and I am so proud of the First Nations members in our caucus for all that they do.