

**SUBMISSION TO THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INQUIRY INTO:**

- (a) Proposals for amending the Tasmanian Constitution to recognise
Aboriginal people as Tasmania's first people; and**
- (b) Any matters incidental thereto.**

From. Lindsay Dawe
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Dear committee members.

I like most other Tasmanian Australians recognize that Aboriginal people occupied Tasmania before it was colonized by Europeans, this is a simple fact that no one should deny, and recognising that Aboriginal people lived in Tasmania before European colonization in our constitution did not seem to be a problem, but the more I have thought about this and after speaking to other more learned people who are far more informed than I, the more it came into question as to whether this was such a good idea.

Listed below are some of the reasons I have changed my opinion about recognising Aboriginal people in our constitution

One possible side effect of recognising Aboriginal people in our constitution is that it could in some peoples eyes make them seem separate and more deserving than other Tasmanian Australians, which could then possibly serve to alienate them from a significant portion of society and do very little to further their efforts in reconciliation and assimilation into a society that should already treat

and recognises them as equal, it could also encourage some in the Aboriginal community to confidently pursue any opportunity to request the Government for other concessions,

Once the constitution has been altered by a Government on the recommendation of any self interest group even if it seems reasonable and justifiable and has Government sympathy, a precedent has then been set, and this could unnecessarily place the current or future Governments in the unenviable position of having to deal with other proposed alterations to our constitution from various high profile groups based on such things as, religious beliefs, ethnicity, sexuality, etc.

In my opinion our constitution should treat all Tasmanian citizens as equal and not differentiate between any of them, it should also be free of any political or social interference and should not be altered or compromised by any social group which has the sympathy of the Government of the day no matter how socially acceptable it may seem.

I am confident the Government can find alternatives to constitutional recognition that will encourage all our Aboriginal people to feel they are an equal part of our Tasmanian community.

We should remember those moving words of the song written by Bruce Woodley.

I AM. YOU ARE. WE ARE AUSTRALIAN.

WE ARE ONE.

Yours sincerely

Lindsay Dawe