

Respect For Tasmania's First People



Cassy O'Connor MP | Greens' Aboriginal Affairs spokesperson

To move forward, we must recognise and reflect on the past, and take tangible, meaningful steps towards true reconciliation.

There are significant barriers standing in the way of reconciliation with Tasmania's first people, who were violently dispossessed of their land.

The wilfully offensive date of Australia Day, the lack of a formal Treaty and a day of reconciliation are issues that would cost nothing to remedy, but mean a great deal.

Governments across Australia have refused to address these issues, and the Liberals have failed to return land.

It is past time to make these straightforward changes so we can begin to move as a State, respectfully and together in the spirit of reconciliation.

THE GREENS WILL

- ▲ Continue to advocate for changing the date of Australia Day
- ▲ Begin work towards a Treaty with Tasmania's first people
- ▲ Create a new public holiday, Reconciliation Day
- ▲ Return further lands to Tasmania's first people

CHANGE THE DATE

Each year, on the 26th of January, Australia is a nation divided by its history. Our First People feel the pain of so many historical and contemporary wrongs, of the killing of Aborigines, land taken at the point of a gun, and of continuing denial of culture.

A new date for our national day would mean all Tasmanians could celebrate free of grief and without feeling conflicted.

It will also mean citizenship ceremonies held on Australia Day could be true celebrations for new Australians without the taint of dispossession and a violent past.

We will advocate locally and in national forums for a change of date. We consult with the Aboriginal community, as well as the broader community, to engage constructively in determining an appropriate date on which all Tasmanians can celebrate

TREATY

Australia is the only Commonwealth country which does not have a Treaty with its first people. We have never entered into formal negotiations with Aboriginal Australians acknowledging the taking of their lands, either as a nation, or as a state.

The Greens will consult with Tasmanian Aboriginal communities to develop an appropriate mechanism by which a formal Treaty between the State of Tasmania and our first people can be negotiated.

The Greens recognise the Treaty negotiation process has three key elements – acknowledgement, a process of negotiation, and formalisation of agreed outcomes such as the form of rights and responsibilities, obligations, and opportunities.

Until we have a Treaty with recognition of the past, reconciliation will be held back

CREATE RECONCILIATION DAY

2018 is the first year that the Reconciliation Day public holiday will be celebrated in the ACT. The ACT's Reconciliation Day is a commitment to strengthen relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and non-Indigenous Australians to reconcile, and to move forward, together.

In the year 2000 in Hobart, 25,000 people marched over the Tasman Bridge in the name of reconciliation. We know Tasmanians are supportive of reconciliation, and we should have a day that celebrates and reflects that truth.

An annual public holiday will demonstrate respect for the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, and a reflection on what has been achieved, and what we can work together to achieve in the future.

LAND RETURNS

Despite their rhetoric the Liberals have only returned 6.53 hectares of land to Aboriginal Tasmanians.¹

The Greens will immediately reintroduce a bill to return 148 hectares of land at Rebecca Creek as well as *larapuna*, also known as Eddystone Point Lighthouse Historic Site. We recognise these are small parcels of significant land to return, but it is unfinished business.

We also support the return of *Wukulina* and *Takayna* to Tasmanian Aboriginals and will work with the Aboriginal community on an ongoing basis to deliver land returns.

REFERENCES

[1. Premier of Tasmania, Additional information provided to Estimates Committee A in respect of the Estimates of The Premier Minister for Sport and Recreation Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Minister for Tourism Hospitality and Events Minister for Heritage and Acting Minister for the Arts, 2017.](#)