

We support the Voice to Parliament: An open heart, respect, and listening are key

This year, all Australians will be asked to make an important choice about whether we should enshrine a First Nations Voice in the Constitution.

In South Australia, Census data shows the rate of Aboriginal people¹ experiencing homelessness increased by 19.3% from 2016 to 2021. According to data collected by the Adelaide Zero Project (AZP) for May 2023, Aboriginal people are overrepresented in the AZP's Active Homeless population (29%), and are disproportionately more likely to be experiencing rough sleeping than non-Aboriginal people (36%). Aboriginal people make up approximately 2.6% of the population in South Australia.

These statistics should concern all South Australians, as they are representative of an entrenched systemic racism impacting Aboriginal people. We believe First Nations peoples are the experts in their own lives and communities and that the Voice will support self-determination and shared decision-making around issues such as housing and homelessness. The Voice is a vital step toward building a better future for all – one where we can work together to end First Nations homelessness entirely.

The [South Australian Alliance to End Homelessness](#) (SAAEH) is proud to stand with the [Yes Campaign for a First Nations Voice to Parliament](#), and strongly supports the [Uluru Statement from the Heart](#).

Alongside our partners in the lead-up to the referendum, SAAEH will be advocating for:

- Open hearts to the stories, experiences, and wisdom of First Nations peoples.
- Respect for one another and engagement in a dialogue that is mindful of the impact of the spoken word.
- Standing up, speaking up and ensuring that the right to vote is afforded to all, including people experiencing homelessness. SAAEH encourages all levels of government to work together and alongside homelessness service providers and our Alliance to realise this right.
- Recognition that the experience of homelessness and disadvantage is disproportionately higher among First Nations peoples across this vast land, and that First Nations peoples are the experts in their own lives and communities.

¹ In South Australia, the preferred term is 'Aboriginal', which refers to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This term is used as the First Nations peoples of South Australia are Aboriginal peoples, and is preferred by the Aboriginal peoples of that region.

- The full implementation of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, particularly target 9 which seeks to ensure that ‘people can secure appropriate, affordable housing that is aligned with their priorities and need’.
- All levels of government in Australia, including services funded by government, to embed the National Priority reforms of Closing the Gap:
 - Formal Partnerships and Shared Decision Making
 - Building the Community Controlled Sector
 - Transforming Government Organisations
 - Shared Access to Data and Information at a Regional Level

We encourage everyone to accept the generous invitation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart and vote ‘yes’ to a request 100 years in the making.

You can get involved by [pledging your support](#) to the Yes23 campaign. [Learn more](#) about the Uluru Statement from the Heart and a First Nations Voice to Parliament.

