

Submission to Cultural Heritage Acts in Queensland

The Queensland Government is currently reviewing the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003 (Qld)* and *Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003 (Qld)* (**Cultural Heritage Acts**). Pursuant to this review, I, as a registered Queensland voter who believes that any Democracy should include heritage and First Nation rights, strongly advise that you consider and act on the following:

- Amend the definition of ‘Aboriginal party’ so that traditional owners with cultural connection to Country can be involved in consultation and negotiation processes, regardless of their status as a native title party.
- Create greater enforcement powers for First Nations, so that we aren’t reliant on the State to protect our cultural heritage if it is in imminent danger of harm or destruction.
- Establish an independent First Nations-led decision-making body that is responsible for dispute resolution and mediation, and for assessing who the right people to speak for Country are.

The Cultural Heritage Acts in Queensland have failed the Wangan and Jagalingou People, and many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. Currently these Acts simply allow developers a smooth ride to gain their approvals without meaningful consultation with the Traditional Owners for Country and without sufficient accountability when acting illegally. The management and protection of cultural heritage should be in their hands, and not in the hands of the State or developers.

I appreciate your attention to these matters,

Respectfully,

Ms Brooke McReynolds, [REDACTED]