

MEDIA STATEMENT



27 June 2023

DJA DJA WURRUNG CORPORATION SAYS 'DJA!' TO VOICE

Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (trading as DJAARA) is advocating for a 'yes' vote in the Voice to Parliament referendum to be held later this year.

Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter said the referendum of 2023 is about making us better as people.

“In the past, we were left out of many conversations directly related to our wellbeing. We can be harsh and judge the people and structures created before us, but to make a difference for the next generations, what we can always do is improve. We can always do better for the people around us,” Mr Carter said.

“Here in central Victoria, Djaara (Dja Dja Wurrung People) are strong believers in ‘for Djaara, by Djaara’ when it comes to issues that affect us.

“My People have persisted. We negotiated for 15 years to be recognised as Traditional Owners of djandak (Dja Dja Wurrung Country), through the Recognition and Settlement Agreement (RSA) we signed with the State of Victoria in 2013.

“Through this process, we are proud and honoured to have built strong relationships with state and local government. We are in the conversations; we are at the table.

“The Voice to Parliament will bring attention to matters that are important to us – and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People – at a Federal level,” Mr Carter said.

The Voice to Parliament will not detract from or interfere with Dja Dja Wurrung rights under the RSA.

“It was very pleasing to see strong support for the Voice from the City of Greater Bendigo councillors at last night’s council meeting. I congratulate the Council on its leadership,” Mr Carter said

Mr Carter cited DJAARA’s recent agreement with the City of Greater Bendigo, Yilingga Marna (which means ‘shake hands’), as an example of the mutual benefits that can be achieved when Traditional Owners are able to inform decisions that affect them.

DJAARA also acknowledged the support of Federal Member for Bendigo Lisa Chesters as a strong advocate campaigning for the Yes campaign.

At an April rally for the Yes vote, Ms Chesters noted that Federal members for Bendigo

had, in the past, supported decisions like the White Australia Policy and the removal of Aboriginal children (now known as the Stolen Generation).

“Things were done to Aboriginal People without their involvement,” Ms Chesters said.
“That’s why this constitution, this vote, this referendum is so critical.”

“Dja Dja Wurrung are the yes, yes speaking People. Here in central Victoria, we can say ‘dja’ to the Voice – Yes,” Mr Carter said.

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