

To whom it may concern,

ya (Hello), I am a Tasmanian Aboriginal woman and employee of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre who has lived here my entire life. I am a witness to my mother, father, grandparents and great grandparents and many other Tasmanian Aboriginal community members who have struggled their entire lives to have the rights we now have today.

It is because of those people that I have grown into a very strong and proud palawa woman and I refuse to stand by and watch all of their hard work be tossed out the window because the Tasmanian government feels the need to open up ALCT elections to a much wider audience, who, unlike the entire Tasmanian Aboriginal community members cannot provide lineage directly back to my ancestors. How can this be?

The fact that Tasmania has the second largest Aboriginal population to the Northern Territory is absurd! How can that be? I'll tell you why, the government decided to establish another pointless policy that also overrides the true custodians of this land by bringing out the "Tick a box" if your Aboriginal and now every man and his dog has Aboriginal heritage BUT cannot prove it yet the rest of us know exactly who are and know exactly where we come from.

It seems to me the government are trying to flood us out with these "Tick a box" blackfellas mostly because they are yes men, we all know how much the which then furthers the government's agenda which is to silence the true grassroots people of Tasmania. But this is nothing new to us or my community, it is a battle my generation have now taken over to stand and fight, to fight for the rights of my people and my land.

Lutruwita is owned by the Tasmanian Aboriginal people and all crown land needs to be returned. Nothing has been returned to my community since the return of my island home Cape Barren Island in 2005, instead of the government reaching out to these other "Aboriginal organisations" that have been around for a minute, with their members being a blackfella for more than 30 seconds, speak and consult with the true owners first and foremost.

TAC has been here since the 70's with Aboriginal political movement happening much earlier. We have always been here and we will never leave, sovereignty in this state was never ceded.

Do the right thing, consult with the true custodians and start to build a meaningful relationships with us where we can work hand in hand.

Aboriginal people get the blame for creating division yet I can easily see for myself, it is in fact the government of this state and the wider community who continue to oppress my people.

We have held a number of community meetings on this topic and my people have spoken and the below dot points explains what my community wants to see happen. They have a voice and will not be silenced. As employee of TAC, part of my job is to secure the future of generations coming before me before I'm too old to fight anymore.

1. Revisions to Aboriginal Land Council Tasmania (ALCT) Elections

- The community does not want any revisions to the ALCT elections.
- The current process allows Aboriginal people to challenge anyone applying to get on the roll who is not Aboriginal. Anyone challenged must prove their eligibility through an Aboriginal Panel appointed by the Tasmanian Electoral Commissioner. This is the most appropriate, transparent, and fair process.

- If anyone applies for anything else, such as employment benefits or getting a driver's licence, they must prove who they are. This process should not be any different.
2. **A land management role for local or regional Aboriginal community organisations.**
 - Aboriginal land managers who look after Aboriginal land, are experienced, and have the deep knowledge and expertise to care for our country and its resources.
 - We should be caring for country in a united way to maintain cultural resources and access for all Aboriginal people.
 3. **Identification of land suitable for transfer**
 - All lands across lutruwita are equally significant to all Aboriginal land. The Tasmanian Aboriginal community has said they want to see the return of any (preferably all) Crown Lands to Tasmanian Aboriginal people.
 4. **Governance issues**
 - ALCT is collective and inclusive ownership model and community members are part of its governance, unlike other organisations. In other organisations, rights are only given to members on their list, it is exclusive and any transfer of land to these organisations will exclude Aboriginal people across Tasmania.

Thank you for your time.

Wulika (Goodbye)

Emerenna Burgess