

I find it very difficult to comprehend how the Australian Government and the Australian Bureau of Statistics is reaching out to local communities to encourage people to enrol, to update their enrolment details and provide adequate and in-language material to encourage people to cast and return their vote for this important societal issue.

These concerns identified have been exacerbated by the downsizing of the Australian Electoral Office in the Northern Territory from 15 staff to 3 and relocating the office to Queensland in your most recent Budget. This decision has significantly reduced the capacity to support voter enrolment across the vast mass of the Northern Territory, including its cross border populations in South Australia and Western Australia.

Furthermore, there is a high proportion of Indigenous electors who do not speak English as a first language and I am concerned that there has been very little information about in-language material being made available for electors in the plebiscite.

Significantly, for a very large number of our remote communities there are poor or non-existent postal services. For many communities, the nearest post office is in the next regional town which could be hours away.

Only 82% of Territorians are presently enrolled, meaning that more than 25,000 eligible voters are not enrolled. There is also high level of mobility amongst Indigenous electors.

I must make plain the concerns of the Northern Territory Government about Territorians, particularly remote Indigenous Territorians, being disenfranchised from voting in the postal plebiscite.

I write in relation to the voluntary postal plebiscite process that has been established to seek the views of all Australians on the electoral roll on whether or not the law in relation to same sex marriage should be changed to allow same sex couples to marry.

The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP
 Prime Minister
 Parliament House
 CANBERRA ACT 2600

Malcolm
 Dear Prime Minister

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CHIEF MINISTER



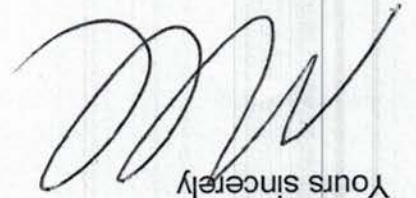
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 PAPER TABLED
 Gunner

I seek your assurance that your Government is doing all it can for all Australians to participate in the plebiscite.

Yours sincerely



MICHAEL GUNNER

15 AUG 2017