

	Northern Territory Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation Providers of TOP END LINK UP SERVICE	
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28 September 2021

Sarah Redden
 Committee Secretary
 The Senate
 Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

By email: fpa.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Ms Redden

Inquiry into the provisions of the Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme (Facilitation) Bill 2021 and the Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2021.

NT Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation (NTSGAC) Chairperson Mrs Eileen Cummings and CEO Mrs Maisie Austin thanks the Chair, Senator Claire Chandler and the other Senators, as well as The Healing Foundation, Shine Lawyers, Law Council of Australia, Australian Human Rights Commission and National Indigenous Australians Agency for their submissions and answers to questions at the public hearing in relation to the Inquiry. NTSGAC wishes to respond to comments made by others in their evidence and to also comment further on our own responses.

In response to the questions if NT Stolen Generations agreed to the one off payment of \$75,000 plus the one off healing assistance payment of \$7,000, or if it was sufficient payment in recognition of the harm caused by forced removal.

NT Stolen Generations peoples feel that no financial value can be put on the suffering and trauma they experienced as a result of the forcible removal and which they continue to experience in their later years. They feel the amount offered is a pittance, especially in view of the amount claimants in other schemes such as the National Redress Scheme for people who experienced institutional child sexual abuse can receive a maximum payment of \$150,000 for example. The insufficiency of these amounts is also referred to in Item 17 of the submission from the Law Council of Australia.

NT Stolen Generations peoples have fought, lobbied and advocated for over 30 years for recognition and compensation. Many of them have passed away and many are suffering from emotional and mental trauma, chronic illness, ill health, dementia, dying and aged in



their late 70s, 80s and 90s. Many have said on numerous occasions in the past that the government is waiting for them all to die before they did anything about compensation. Due to their current situations, NT Stolen Generations survivors agreed to the payment of \$75,000 plus \$7,000 because they felt they had no other choice. If they did not accept this payment, they could be fighting and waiting for more years, which many of them do not have left.

The Redress Scheme was announced on 5 August 2021 and will run for five years. It will open for applications on 1 March 2022.

NT Stolen Generations would like consideration given to the scheme timeframe as per Items 18 and 19 of the Law Council of Australia's submission to allow the scheme to run for six to eight years as it "would ease concern about potential delays with the scheme, which may be either unforeseen or associated with the COVID-19 pandemic".

NT Stolen Generations feel the 1st March for applications is too far away and would appreciate the date being brought forward. This is also due to their situation as mentioned previously.

The Redress Scheme allows for families of a Stolen Generations member who passes between 5 August 2021 and 1 March 2022 to submit an application on their behalf.

NT Stolen Generations would like this extended to allow families to submit an application for a Stolen Generation member who is suffering with chronic illness, ill health or dementia and who is incapable of making an application.

Subsection 4(3) of the Facilitation Bill regarding determining the value of a person's assets.

NT Stolen Generations also believe that the redress payments should not affect asset testing or income testing for other Commonwealth payments or benefits.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Eileen Cummings
Chairperson

"Bringing Families Together"

NTSGAC acknowledges all the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their rights to continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to our Elders past, present and future.

