

Dr Pauline Reynolds

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Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

This submission is regarding the Inquiry into local governance on Norfolk Island.

With the current governance and revenue-raising approaches, the retention of the island's land, resources and related cultural practices and heritage by the Norfolk Islanders is in peril.

The terms of reference of this Inquiry are based on the structure of the NIRC which was introduced after the dissolution of the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly. I strongly believe that a methodology of revenue-raising that reinstates a Norfolk Island GST would be far superior to the present imposition of land rates and waste management fees which is becoming preventative for young Norfolk Islanders to buy or maintain real estate or operate businesses. It is an unsustainable situation for Norfolk Island families who have called this island home for so many generations.

Those many generations of Norfolk Islanders (descendants of the Pitcairn Islanders who arrived here in 1856 at the invitation and generosity of Queen Victoria) are invested in the island, it is their homeland and the place where their ancestors are buried. Because the island has been loved and cared for by the community, the community itself should be considered in each step of governance. The Norfolk Island community holds the knowledge that has kept this island well-run, cared for, and environmentally progressive.

Governance comes in many forms. Norfolk Islanders should also maintain the right to control, administer and manage their rich heritage including all archival and material heritage relating to them. There has long been a fear in the community that items of cultural significance might be taken off-island for storage. Norfolk Island's material heritage is one of the foundations of the Norfolk Island tourism industry, and more importantly, evidence of the richness of our story; it is of astonishing value, bringing in revenue for the island, but revenue is not the only form of wealth. It is the pride of the Norfolk Island people, who must be considered in all facets of governance of their island and their heritage.

Kind regards,


Dr. Pauline Reynolds