



**The Real
Republic**
Real Reform



A SUBMISSION BY **THE REAL REPUBLIC AUSTRALIA** TO THE
SENATE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE FOR ITS **INQUIRY INTO NATIONHOOD,**
NATIONAL IDENTITY, AND DEMOCRACY

SEPTEMBER 2019



Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
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Dear Committee Secretary

I am pleased to lodge with you a submission from the Real Republic Australia to help inform deliberations of the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee in its inquiry into nationhood, national identity, and democracy.

As you will see from the submission, the Real Republic Australia believes there is a direct link between our national identity, public trust in our democratic system, and our form of government.

We believe the time is long overdue to overhaul our current form of government, to move to one that better reflects modern Australia, and one that can better meet future challenges.

We believe a shift to a republic Australia with a directly elected head of state and the adoption of other basic Constitutional changes will enhance our national identity, improve public trust, and enhance Australia's standing in the world.

I advise that this submission may be released publicly and that I am willing to appear before the Committee to give evidence in person if its Members so desire.

Yours sincerely,

David Muir
Chair
The Real Republic Australia
www.realrepublic.com.au

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- ☐ We urge the Committee to recognise the links between our national identity and our form of government.
- ☐ We ask the Committee to support an overhaul the current system and move to one that reflects modern Australia, its values, the expectations of its people, and one which can better meet future challenges.
- ☐ We believe a shift to an Australian republic with a directly elected head of state and the adoption of other basic Constitutional changes will enhance our national identity, improve public trust, allow all Australians to start a new page in our nation's history, and strengthen Australia's standing in the world.
- ☐ We urge the Committee to support the proposed changes we have outlined and the need for relevant Constitutional amendments with each approved by a referendum of Australian voters.
- ☐ We believe a shift to an Australian republic with a directly elected head of state should be the initial major focus of reform but with other suggested Constitutional changes also helping to deliver improved political stability and public trust, and strengthen national identity and Australia's standing in the world.
- ☐ We urge the Committee to consider the benefits in building a strong, independent national identity through the establishment of an Australian republic with an elected head of state.
- ☐ We believe a genuinely Australian national identity cannot be developed until we are both seen to be and are a truly independent nation on the world stage.
- ☐ We urge the Committee to consider the economic benefits that would accrue to our nation by having a genuinely Australian head of state capable of promoting our nation in global markets.
- ☐ We also point to the strengthened involvement in our process of government by offering Australian voters an opportunity to be directly responsible for the election of our head of state.
- ☐ We ask the Committee to recognise the benefits to public confidence in having a directly elected head of state with codified powers responsible for overseeing integrity processes at the federal level.
- ☐ We ask the Committee to recognise that such responsibilities make it vital that our head of state is directly elected by Australian voters to ensure their independence.
- ☐ We ask the Committee to recognise that recognition incur Constitution of indigenous Australians and their heritage is essential to our national identity.
- ☐ We suggest that embracing indigenous recognition and other Constitutional reforms such as shifting to a republic with an elected head of state may result in widespread agreement to move away from celebrating Australia Day and instead agree to mark the birth of an Australian republic as our national day.
- ☐ We suggest the current electoral system allowing for political manipulation of election dates and three-year terms which do not need to be completed in full by a government all help build cynicism in voters.
- ☐ We urge the Committee to recommend a fixed four-year term for the House of Representatives that would inject greater certainty into our electoral system, reduce over time the number of elections, cut costs, and end partisan political game playing by Prime Ministers when calling elections.
- ☐ We believe cynicism about our political system is fed by the nexus between the size of the upper and lower houses of Federal Parliament that has seen an unnecessary expansion in Senate numbers over time.
- ☐ We urge the Committee to recommend a process leading to a referendum to return to the original six Senators per state and retain the two Senators each for the NT and ACT.
- ☐ We urge the Committee to support Constitutional reforms allowing lower house vacancies to be filled by a casual vacancy system to deliver greater stability, cut costs, and build greater faith in our political system.
- ☐ We ask the Committee to support Constitutional recognition of local government to lift its status and performance expectations which in turn would instill greater confidence among voters.
- ☐ We ask the Committee to recommend a process for addressing the need for beneficial Constitutional reforms including a move to a republic with an elected head of state, and to recognise that such a process will deliver better government and great confidence in our political system by giving Australians an opportunity to be involved.

THE REAL REPUBLIC AUSTRALIA

The [Real Republic Australia](#) continues the work of former Lord Mayor of Brisbane, businessman, and philanthropist, Clem Jones (*pictured*), in advocating for an Australian republic with a directly elected head of state as well as other Constitutional reforms.

Clem Jones (1918-2007) is best known as Brisbane's longest-serving Lord Mayor (1961-1975) and for the many civic, cultural, sporting, and community projects that came to fruition and transformed the city under his leadership.

Support for an Australian republic with an elected head of state was a passionate cause that Clem advocated throughout his life.

The Whitlam Government appointed Clem as a delegate on behalf of local government and seconded him to the executive of the 1975 Constitutional Convention.

The 1975 Convention was charged with conducting a proposed rewrite of the Australian Constitution and its delegates were largely parliamentarians. The Convention handed down its report in 1978 with little reference to the republic as such and its work largely fell by the wayside in the wake of the Whitlam Government's dismissal that year.

In 1997, the year before the Constitutional Convention in Canberra called by Prime Minister John Howard, Clem formed the Clem Jones Queensland Constitution Republic Team and fielded a slate of candidates for the statewide election of delegates.

Clem was elected as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention in Canberra in February 1998 together with Brisbane lawyer David Muir and then Townsville Deputy Mayor, Cr Ann Bunnell. He and his team argued strongly for the adoption of a directly elected head of state, believing that it was the only model Australian voters would support.

Clem also believed that the 1998 Convention spent too much time arguing about whether Australia should become a republic or remain a constitutional monarchy. This debate, he suggested, should be truncated with a vote of delegates early in the Convention on that threshold question so they could devote more time to refining a model likely to be accepted by voters.

Unfortunately, the model that emerged from the Convention was that proposed by the Australian Republic Movement — a so-called minimalist model for a head of state chosen by Federal Parliament. This was the model that went to a referendum even though it had emerged from the Convention with less than half of the delegates in support — 73 out of 152 delegates with 57 voting against and 22 abstentions.

In the lead-up to the November 1999 republic referendum Clem and former NSW state and federal independent MP Ted Mack participated in the "no" case committee established by the Prime Minister. In that same month the republic referendum was lost (*see table*).

The republic model put to the 1999 referendum did not satisfy the consistently expressed wishes of the Australian people for a directly elected Head of State. Voters simply rejected what was offered to them — a politicians' republic. The model was deeply flawed in that there was no transparency in the appointment of head of state.

The Prime Minister of the day could disregard the final list of names put forward by the nominations committee and the Prime Minister could also unilaterally and without notice or grounds sack the head of state.

The hard lesson learned 20 years ago is that Australians will back meaningful change, not empty symbolism. Direct election is critical to this in providing a direct engagement with the Australian people in the election of our head of state.

Clem died in December 2007 but in his will he gave directions for a national campaign for a popularly elected head of state in an Australian republic.

This advocacy work is conducted through the [Real Republic Australia](#) that campaigns for the model of a republic based on a directly elected head of state and other Constitutional reforms.



REPUBLIC REFERENDUM 6 NOVEMBER 1999		
STATE	% YES	% NO
NSW	46.43	53.57
Vic	49.84	50.16
Qld	37.44	62.56
WA	41.48	58.52
SA	43.57	56.43
Tas	40.37	59.63
ACT	63.27	36.73
NT	48.77	51.23
AUST	45.13	54.87

POTENTIAL REAL REFORMS

The Real Republic Australia believes there is a direct link between our national identity and how our government operates.

We believe the time is long overdue to overhaul our current form of government in several aspects and move to one that better reflects modern Australia, its values, the expectations of its people — one that can better meet future challenges as well as project a truly independent Australia to the world.

These proposed changes would need to be based on Constitutional amendments with each approved by a referendum of Australian voters. We believe a shift to an Australian republic with a directly elected head of state should be the major focus of such reforms.

However, such a change needs to be supported by a range of other basic Constitutional reforms that we believe will enhance our national identity, improve public trust, and strengthen Australia's standing in the world. The Real Republic Australia believes having a directly elected head of state is just part of a process for real reform.

We should use a referendum as a chance to make other Constitutional changes that deliver real benefits to all Australians. Constitutional changes are made very rarely, so we should consider a staged plan for other reforms such as:

- A head of state overseeing integrity processes
- Constitutional recognition of indigenous Australian
- Fixed and synchronised four-year terms for both Houses of Parliament
- Reducing the number of Senators
- Lower house casual vacancies
- Recognition of local government

We believe all of these are real reforms that could help build our national identity, and build greater trust and confidence in our system of government.

These proposed changes would need to be based on Constitutional amendments with each approved by a referendum of Australian voters.

By becoming a republic with an elected head of state, and through other Constitutional reforms, we have an opportunity to start a new page in our nation's history and have all Australians move forward with greater confidence in our system of government.

- **We urge the Committee to recognise the links between our national identity and our form of government.**
- **We ask the Committee to support an overhaul the current system and move to one that reflects modern Australia, its values, the expectations of its people, and one which can better meet future challenges.**
- **We believe a shift to an Australian republic with a directly elected head of state and the adoption of other basic Constitutional changes will enhance our national identity, improve public trust, allow all Australians to start a new page in our nation's history, and strengthen Australia's standing in the world.**
- **We urge the Committee to support the proposed changes we have outlined and the need for relevant Constitutional amendments with each approved by a referendum of Australian voters.**
- **We believe a shift to an Australian republic with a directly elected head of state should be the initial major focus of reform but with other suggested Constitutional changes also helping to deliver improved political stability and public trust, and strengthen national identity and Australia's standing in the world.**

AN AUSTRALIAN REPUBLIC WITH A DIRECTLY ELECTED HEAD OF STATE

A shift to an Australian republic would be a huge step towards a stronger and more independent national identity.

While we have, on balance, benefited from inheriting a system of government and laws from the British there are some such as indigenous Australians who rightly point to its historical flaws and shortcomings.

Since the arrival of the first European settlers on our continent in the 18th century there has never been common ground among all of its inhabitants on the issue of national identity. Post-World War II immigration has also influenced the debate over our national identity.

The Real Republic Australia believes the time is long past when we should accept a foreign monarch as Australia's head of state. While we continue to do so we can never establish a fully autonomous national identity.

Until we change to a republic no Australian can hope to become our head of state, and the unfairness and illogical nature of that situation is especially acute when you consider that it means no descendant of the original inhabitants our land could ever be its head of state.

We recognise and respect the service given to our nation by the British Royal Family over generations and we in no way offer any personal criticism or denigration of the way they have met their obligations under our existing Constitution. But if we wish to develop an entirely Australian identity we must become fully independent and that means having our own Australian head of state as a republic.

When a referendum is passed and we make the change to a republic the respect and admiration for the British Royal Family will not diminish. We would remain a member of the Commonwealth of Nations and join the existing 32 republics in that group of 53 nations. In fact, only 16 members of the Commonwealth have the British monarch as their head of state.

Under the model favoured by the Real Republic our head of state would be directly elected by Australian voters.

The head of state's powers would be codified and the Prime Minister and Cabinet would continue to run the government and retain executive powers. We see no compelling reason to dramatically change the title of our head of state. The position could continue to be designated as the Governor-General of Australia or the Governor of Australia.

Nor do we see the need to insert the word "republic" in references to our nation. We could continue to be known formally as the Commonwealth of Australia, as the designation "commonwealth" helps to underpin what should be the inclusive and cooperative nature of our federation.

Experience overseas, such as in Ireland, shows a directly elected head of state can lift the profile and presence of a nation on the world stage. Heads of state have significant roles to play in promoting their country overseas — its people, products, and destinations. The British Royal Family does that when they travel overseas, but they promote British not Australian industry and investment opportunities.

A directly elected head of state for Australia would promote our economic opportunities, and that can lead to more investment and jobs.

A directly elected head of state would also help develop greater involvement in our system of government by giving Australian voters a say in picking their head of state. People are engaged when they are involved in decision-making processes, and the model we favour for an Australian republic would offer them the opportunity to be involved in deciding who should be our head of state.

- **We urge the Committee to consider the benefits in building a strong, independent national identity through the establishment of an Australian republic with an elected head of state.**
- **We believe a genuinely Australian national identity cannot be developed until we are both seen to be and are a truly independent nation on the world stage.**
- **We urge the Committee to consider the economic benefits that would accrue to our nation by having a genuinely Australian head of state capable of promoting our nation in global markets.**
- **We also point to the strengthened involvement in our process of government by offering Australian voters an opportunity to be directly responsible for the election of our head of state.**

A HEAD OF STATE OVERSEEING INTEGRITY PROCESSES

Ensuring the integrity of our political processes is key to restoring and building trust in our democratic system of government. We believe it should be a key aim of Constitutional reform.

We advocate the need for an elected head of state to be in charge of the fourth arm of government with responsibility for integrity in appointing anti-corruption bodies and ombudsmen and other relevant positions to ensure that corruption is weeded out of our democratic processes.

It is this vital role that necessitates a directly elected head of state, not one appointed by the politicians who are subject to oversight by those very same anti-corruption and integrity bodies.

A directly elected head of state with such responsibilities would avoid the present scenario of “Caesar judging Caesar” in which the executive government appoints and effectively controls anti-corruption bodies that are examining the conduct of government.

Restoring faith in process and agencies responsible for fighting corruption at the federal level is necessary to help build trust among Australians in our system of government. That is why the Real Republic Australia advocates that an elected head of state in an Australian republic should also have responsibility for appointing those overseeing anti-corruption agencies and offices.

This was a concept that was also favoured by the late Ted Mack, who held the unique distinction of being elected as an independent representing local, state, and federal seats in NSW. Ted, who died at 84 in November 2018, was a vigorous advocate for integrity in politics and his name became a byword for honesty and accountability at every level of government in which he served. Ted was also a delegate to the 1998 Constitutional Convention and promoted the idea of a directly elected head of state with responsibility for integrity issues. He helped found the Real Republic Australia with the late Clem Jones.

In December 2010 Ted Mack [wrote about the need to restore integrity to federal politics](#) by abandoning the “self-regulation” approach to anti-corruption efforts and re-establishing the separation of power through an Australian republic with an elected head of state in charge of integrity issues.

“When Australia becomes a republic,” he said, “the appointment of the Governor General should be transferred from the Monarch to the people by direct election thus becoming a genuine republic where the people are sovereign. This would restore the separation powers and enable the Governor-General to monitor the integrity of the political system.

“The Governor-General would then take over the appointment of all the current ‘linesmen’ of the present system, ie: the people whose sole function it is to ensure the integrity of the government such as corruption commissions, ombudsman, auditors and even the Speaker of the Parliament. These offices could then operate without fear of offending executive government as exists at present,” he wrote.

A directly elected head of state is needed to oversee integrity processes and agencies and keep our politicians honest without fear or favour. The system would be independent of the executive government and would be seen as independent, thereby generating greater faith and trust in our system of government.

These steps would ensure the public of the priority for accountability and transparency in public administration.

A new and enhanced role of a directly elected head of state overseeing genuinely independent mechanisms for transparency in government will help drive out corruption and bad conduct from our political system. It is this vital role that necessitates a directly elected head of state, not one appointed by the politicians who are subject to oversight by those very same anti-corruption and integrity bodies.

- **We ask the Committee to recognise the benefits to public confidence in having a directly elected head of state with codified powers responsible for overseeing integrity processes at the federal level.**
- **We ask the Committee to recognise that such responsibilities make it vital that our head of state is directly elected by Australian voters to ensure their independence.**

CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION OF INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

Recognition in our Constitution of the indigenous heritage of our nation and indigenous Australians is long overdue.

It is more than 50 years since the last change to the Constitution giving legislative powers to the federal government make laws in relation to the first Australians.

It is high time for Constitutional renewal and recognition of indigenous Australians. We cannot address our national identity of our nation without also addressing indigenous recognition.

The Real Republic Australia does not advocate any specific form of recognition of indigenous Australians, believing they should be involved themselves along with all other Australians in deciding the appropriate form of recognition.

We suggest that this issue and other potential Constitutional changes listed below should be addressed in a coherent manner through a forward plan for examining and making recommendations on changes that would each then be put to a referendum. This approach is canvassed further below.

Needless to say, indigenous recognition goes hand in glove with national identity and needs to be addressed. By examining this issue through a properly structured and coherent consultation process we may resolve divisive issues such as how we should celebrate our national day.

For example, if our nation becomes a republic through a referendum there may be widespread agreement to move away from celebrating Australia Day and instead mark the birth of an Australian republic — an anniversary that could be supported by all Australians.

- **We ask the Committee to recognise that recognition incur Constitution of indigenous Australians and their heritage is essential to our national identity.**
- **We suggest that embracing indigenous recognition and other Constitutional reforms such as shifting to a republic with an elected head of state may result in widespread agreement to move away from celebrating Australia Day and instead agree to mark the birth of an Australian republic as our national day.**

FIXED AND SYNCHRONISED FOUR-YEAR TERMS FOR BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

The Real Republic Australian believes that public faith and trust in our system of government would be enhanced by injecting greater certainty into electoral processes and removing opportunities for politicians to “play the system”.

The Federal Parliament and consequently any federal government are elected for three years which we consider to be too short, and also note that on many occasions a government does not even run for its full three-year term. A prime minister is allowed under our current system to call an election whenever it is politically advantageous for their party.

For example, in the 50 years from 1996 to 2019 we have endured 21 federal elections when the current three-year term for our Federal Parliament suggests we should have had 17. If fixed four-year terms had been in effect, we would have had 13 federal elections.

The Real Republic Australia advocates a fixed four-year term for the House of Representatives that would inject greater certainty into our electoral system, reduce over time the number of elections, cut costs, and end partisan political game playing by Prime Ministers when calling elections. We suggest the current system allowing for blatant political manipulation of the electoral cycle builds cynicism in voters.

Four-year fixed terms would also deliver savings to taxpayers who foot the bill for our electoral process as well as reducing the fundraising demands on politicians and their parties which, as event have proved over many years, can be the source of corruption or questionable political donations leading to an erosion of public trust.

A fixed four-year term for the House of Representatives and Senate (*see next section*) could also encourage shorter election campaigns as electoral rolls could close earlier and voters and political parties and politicians would all be aware of the need to release and advocate policies to be costed and placed before voters for their judgement.

We advocate that fixed four-year terms should also apply to the Senate, instead of the existing six years.

We believe a six-year term is too long without facing the people and at present the mandate of a government can be frustrated by Senators elected years earlier. This type of obstructionism can lead to despair and a loss of faith in our democratic system among voters.

Synchronising Senate and House of Representatives elections would better reflect the mandate given to a government through the decisions of voters on election day even if the elected government may not hold as majority of seats in the upper house.

It would also mean cost savings to taxpayers as the prospect of half-Senate elections would disappear.

- **We suggest the current electoral system allowing for political manipulation of election dates and three-year terms which do not need to be completed in full by a government all help build cynicism in voters.**
- **We urge the Committee to recommend a fixed four-year term for the House of Representatives that would inject greater certainty into our electoral system, reduce over time the number of elections, cut costs, and end partisan political game playing by Prime Ministers when calling elections.**

REDUCING THE NUMBER OF SENATORS

We believe political stability and faith in our democratic system would be enhanced and taxpayer funds would be saved by reducing the current number of Senators.

Our Constitution currently demands that the House of Representatives have “as nearly as practicable” twice the number of seats as the Senate. That is why as the lower house has expanded we have reached a position where we now have 76 Senators — 12 for each original state and two for each of the NT and ACT.

The Real Republic Australia believes each state does not need 12 Senators each. Most voters would be unable to name the 12 Senators sitting in Canberra supposedly representing their state.

We think it is a simple question — if you can’t name them, do you need them?

Our Constitution provides for governments to be formed in the House of Representatives, with the Senate meant to be a states’ house and a house of review. If it is truly a states’ house, when have all Senators from any state voted as a bloc to protect the interests of their state?

The truth is it has become another chamber divided on party lines — and not just divided but fractured as Senate numbers have grown, quotas for securing a seat have shrunk, and minor and micro parties have done deals to gain footholds enabling them to hold a government’s mandate hostage.

Instead of a house of review it has become a house of frustration leading to instability which in turn can lead to a loss of faith in our system of government. Returning at least to the original six Senators for each state — with territories keeping their two — would be appropriate.

Forty Senators on the public payroll is surely more than enough and public cynicism about the real value of 76 Senators would be addressed by cutting their numbers.

We need reform soon to break the Constitutional nexus between the upper and lower house of parliament or else at some stage in the future taxpayers will have to foot the bill for a House of Representatives of 300 MPs requiring a Senate of around 150.

Prime Minister Harold Holt tried but failed to break the nexus at the 1967 referendum when states then had 10 Senators each. The need for Senate reform is now more obvious and urgent if we value stability in government.

It is instructive to note that each of the 50 states in the USA has just two senators for a nation with a population around 10 times that of Australia.

- **We believe cynicism about our political system is fed by the nexus between the size of the upper and lower houses of parliament that has seen an unnecessary expansion in Senate numbers over time.**
- **We urge the Committee to recommend a process leading to a referendum to return to the original six Senators per state and retain the two Senators each for the NT and ACT.**

LOWER HOUSE CASUAL VACANCIES

Applying the casual vacancy system of the Senate to the House of Representatives would avoid the cost of by-elections between general elections, delivering more cost savings and greater stability and certainty to the administration of our nation.

Senate vacancies are filled by a nominee of the political party previously holding the seat who is endorsed by the relevant state parliament. The same approach could easily be applied to the lower house and a process for replacing an independent MP could also be applied, although we will not canvass details in full in this submission.

If supported at a referendum this would put an end to disruptive and costly by-elections such as the five we saw in four states in July 2018 and a by-election would be avoided immediately after an election when a defeated party leader may decide to retire from politics.

Fewer costly by-elections would not only save taxpayer funds but the greater stability it delivered which in turn would help build greater faith in our democratic processes.

- **We urge the Committee to support Constitutional reforms allowing lower house vacancies to be filled by a casual vacancy system to deliver greater stability, cut costs, and build greater faith in our political system.**

RECOGNITION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Constitutional recognition of local government would remove uncertainty over the legality of direct Federal funding. A planned referendum question on this issue was postponed in 2013.

Recognition would lift the status of our system of local governments and place a greater onus on them in terms of meeting standards of behaviour, professionalism, and transparency.

This, in turn, would instill a higher level of confidence in the system among voters.

- **We ask the Committee to support Constitutional recognition of local government to lift its status and performance expectations which in turn would instill greater confidence among voters.**

A COHERENT PROCESS

The Real Republic Australia wants to see an Australian republic with an elected head of state. But we have always maintained that Constitutional reforms should not stop there. We also believe we need to widen our focus and not talk just about a republic and our head of state.

We advocate the Constitutional reforms outlined above because they will deliver real benefits to all Australians and our political system. Australians will be energised and involved if given the opportunity to have a say in real and beneficial Constitutional reforms, just as they would be if given the chance to elect their head of state.

What is needed is a coherent process to address reforms. We should not undertake any Constitutional overhaul in a piecemeal fashion. That is why we recommend that a federal government set out a process to examine a range of reforms such as the ones we have cited in this submission.

This would allow for public impute through submissions and hearings and the shaping of recommendations that ultimately lead to a referendum question on each proposed reform. This process may take several terms of office which is why it would need a bipartisan commitment to real reform.

We believe it is imperative for all sides of politics to recognise that Constitutional reforms are needed, and to commit to a process to achieve it which gives all Australians an opportunity to participate.

- **We ask the Committee to recommend a process for addressing the need for beneficial Constitutional reforms including a move to a republic with an elected head of state, and to recognise that such a process will deliver better government and great confidence in our political system by giving Australians an opportunity to be involved.**

CONCLUSION

As outlined in this submission, the Real Republic Australia believes a change to our system of government to a republican model would help strengthen our national identity by projecting Australia as a truly independent nation on the world stage.

The direct election of our head of state would improve public participation and confidence in our system of government.

The other Constitutional reforms advocated by the Real Republic Australia would similarly enhance our national identity and build greater stability in our system of government while strengthening confidence and trust in the system among Australians and reducing cynicism.

APPENDIX: THE CLEM JONES GROUP AND OTHER COMMUNITY CAUSES

Throughout his life, in politics and in retirement, Clem Jones played an active role in community and a philanthropic work, contributing his energy, ideas, and funds to a variety of causes.

Directions left in his will ensure his philanthropic work continues. Since his death in 2007 around \$26 million has been distributed by trustees of Clem's estate through the Clem Jones Foundation, the Clem Jones Estate, and from companies within the Clem Jones Group. Medical research is a major focus and funds provided by the Clem Jones entities have helped research bodies to leverage financial support from governments and other sources to generate larger project budgets.

The [Clem Jones Centre for Ageing Dementia Research](#) (CJCADR) within the Queensland Brain Institute (*pictured*) at the University of Queensland is undertaking promising work into finding a cure for Alzheimer's and ageing dementia.

The [Clem Jones Research Centre for Regenerative Medicine](#) at Bond University focuses on the use of stem cells in the repair of human tissue and treatment of disease, including age-related macular degeneration.



The [Clem Jones Centre for Neurobiology and Stem Cell Research](#) at Griffith University is conducting world-leading research into the transplantation of a patient's own stem cells to repair spinal cord damage. The research has the potential to deliver a cure for paralysis and brain injury.

The Wesley Hospital's palliative care services have also received financial support from the Clem Jones Trust.



In his lifetime Clem helped fund the expansion of [Foodbank into Queensland](#) in 1995 (*pictured*) after its foundation in NSW in 1992. Foodbank uses food donated by manufacturers, processors, and producers to support charities helping feed those in need. Clem also contributed funds to meet the costs associated with establishing Foodbank in Townsville and the formation of a national overarching organisation, Foodbank Australia.

His estate supports a [school breakfast program through the YMCA](#) with more than 2.7 million meals served to schoolchildren across 89 schools in the past decade.

Clem's estate helped support [the Brisbane Strikers soccer team](#) over the past 10 years. The Strikers are a major source of players in state and national soccer teams and play an important role in encouraging youth in sport.

A successful example of Clem's philosophy of engaging youth in sport to encourage them into positive not negative activities is the [Clem Jones Centre](#) at Carina in Brisbane (*pictured*) founded and developed by him through the Camp Hill Carina Welfare Association over more than 50 years. The centre hosts a range of sporting clubs and community organisations and activities on a 17ha site.



The Clem Jones Group also advocates for voluntary assisted dying law reform across Australia, in line with the wishes in Clem's will.

This further background information is provided simply to show that the motives of entities within the Clem Jones Group in supporting medical research, community causes, voluntary assisted dying law reform, and an Australian republic with an elected head of state, are true to those of Clem himself — to deliver real and meaningful change that helps ease adversity and suffering, and to build stronger communities while widening the options available to individual Australians and helping to improve their lives.



The [Real Republic Australia](#) is supported by the Clem Jones Group which carries on the work of Brisbane's longest-serving Lord Mayor, businessman, community worker, and philanthropist, Dr Clem Jones, who was a delegate to both the 1975 and 1998 Constitutional Conventions. Dr Jones died in December 2007 and in his will he expressed his wish for a national campaign for a republic based on his preferred model of a directly elected head of state. The Real Republic Australia continues his campaign.