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MEDIA RELEASE

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Indigenous Affairs

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Inauthentic art inquiry report published

A parliamentary inquiry into proliferation of inauthentic Indigenous 'style' art and craft heard that up to 80% of all souvenirs sold in Australia supposedly to represent First Nations cultures are fake.

The Indigenous Affairs Committee released its report today, making eight recommendations for reducing the prevalence of imitation First Nations art and craft.

Committee Chair, Ann Sudmalis said:

The inauthentic items have no connection to First Nations peoples and are often cheaply made imports. The misappropriation of First Nations cultures in this way is unacceptable and cannot continue unchecked.

The report, available on the [committee's website](#), includes recommendations that:

- the Productivity Commission conducts a comprehensive structural analysis of the First Nations art and craft markets so that the economic opportunities for First Nations communities can be determined;
- the Indigenous Art Code be properly funded to foster responsible retail and supply practices;
- First Nations art centres be better resourced for capacity building; and
- effective information guides and standards be developed to inform customers and businesses about authenticity.

Mrs Sudmalis also said:

These imitation products have a profound and harmful effect on First Nations peoples and do not teach or inform the buyer about Indigenous heritage, as they have no connection to it.

First Nations peoples have been the custodians of their cultures for tens of thousands of years. It is an ethical and moral demand that we assist this guardianship into the future.

The committee's recommendations are intended to chart a path forward to foster and preserve authentic First Nations cultural expressions for the benefit of all Australians.

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