

GREENS ANNOUNCE ABORIGINAL POLICY INITIATIVE.

Thursday, 19 March 2015.

On National Close the Gap Day, Greens MP and Aboriginal Affairs spokesperson Jan Barham has announced the Greens' initiatives to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in NSW.

"The Greens policy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People acknowledges the failings of Government to address the devastating conditions in many areas for Aboriginal people," said Ms Barham.

Key elements of the policy include:

- a NSW Premier's report on outcomes for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples,
- a \$250 million investment in Aboriginal housing to deliver around 1,000 homes,
- a plan and protocols to clear the backlog of 26,000 Aboriginal land claims,
- strategies for Aboriginal employment & training, including child welfare & tourism,
- lowering the eligibility age for the Seniors Card to 45 years for Aboriginal people, and
- a NSW Parliamentary inquiry into reparations for the Stolen Generations

Ms Barham said: "NSW can take the lead and prepare a state based annual report on a broader set of Closing the Gap indicators to ensure that the funding and policies that are in place are delivering outcomes."

Last year Greens MLC Jan Barham presented a motion to the Parliament for the establishment of an inquiry into Stolen Generations reparations. In Tasmania, legislation has been enacted to provide for compensation and there is a similar bill before the South Australian Parliament.

"The history of removal of Aboriginal people from their families and country in NSW still affects the lives of many, and an inquiry to report and consider appropriate reparations could deliver a framework for genuine redress."

"The health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is of major concern with life expectancy identified as between 10 and 17 years less than the general population. The Greens have called for eligibility to the NSW Seniors Card to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from the age of 45 years, to enable earlier opportunities for access to health and transport services.

"The health and wellbeing of people is determined strongly by their ability to access safe and stable housing. The Greens have acknowledged that there needs to be a major injection of funding to facilitate more housing and reduce the increasing issue of homelessness for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people."

Contact.

Jan Barham – 0447 853 891

[Background documents available: Policy Initiative and Parliamentary motions on Stolen Generations Inquiry and Aboriginal Seniors Card]