

# The case for voting ‘YES’

*A PROPOSED LAW: To alter the Constitution to establish the Commonwealth of Australia as a republic with the Queen and Governor-General being replaced by a President appointed by a two-thirds majority of the members of the Commonwealth Parliament.*

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## **An Australian Republic - it's all about our future**

Australia has evolved and matured as an independent nation.

All Australians should be proud of our country and committed to its values.

Our Head of State should be chosen on merit and not by the privilege of birth.

Every Australian child should be able to aspire to be our Head of State.

As it stands today, no Australian, no matter how talented they are or how hard they work will ever be Australia's Head of State.

The past has served us well, but as a vibrant growing nation it's time to move on.

Our pride and stature as a truly independent nation are a vital part of our national unity.

An Australian President will represent our uniquely Australian identity as we face the world into the future.

## **Becoming a Republic simply means having an Australian as Head of State instead of the Queen**

It's time to have our own Head of State.

Britain and the British monarchy have served us well and will always be part of our history.

However, the British monarchy is no longer relevant to our daily lives as Australians.

Now we need someone who will proudly promote Australia and our interests - someone who is one of us.

## **We should stand on our own two feet**

From our beginnings as an ancient land and a British colony, we have progressed and grown.

We now come from many backgrounds and nationalities - our Head of State should represent all Australians.

Only an Australian can do that.

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It's 100 years since Federation, and the time is right for us to stand tall.

We should take the next step by confirming to the world our true independence as a nation, no longer constitutionally tied to England.

## A small step, important and safe

Replacing the Queen with an Australian Head of State is a small but important symbolic step for all Australians. It is the final step to confirm our independence.

Only minor amendments to our Constitution will be required, and all of our democratic rights will stay the same.

Australia's Commonwealth Attorney-General has announced what will not change if Australia becomes a republic:

- *It would not change the flag or the national anthem.*
- *It would not change the number of public holidays.*
- *It would not mark a break with our tradition of stable, parliamentary democracy.*
- *It would not alter the day-to-day operation of the Commonwealth Parliament.*
- *It would not give the President more or different powers to those of the Queen's representative in Australia, the Governor-General.*
- *It would not create an office of President that is more grand or expensive than that of the current Governor-General.*

Australia will maintain its friendly relationships with Britain; we will continue to be part of the Commonwealth, and we will continue to compete in the Commonwealth Games.

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## An Australian President

The way for Australia to become a Republic and to choose our President emerged from the 1998 Constitutional Convention, after 152 delegates representing all Australians had considered various alternative proposals.

If the referendum is approved, we will have an Australian President replacing the Queen and the Governor-General. The Australian President will have the same job and the same powers as the Governor-General.

The Australian President will be very different to the US President - an Australian President will have an important and respected position, but with limited powers that will not change our stable system of Government.

## A President, not a politician

The way Australians choose and change our President will be more democratic and open than the way the Governor-General is appointed. All Australians will have the opportunity to nominate a fellow Australian for the office of President. These nominations will be considered by a special Nominations Committee made up of representatives from all Australian parliaments and all parts of our community. It will prepare a short list and then the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition will agree on one nominee. That person will then need to be approved by a two-thirds majority of a joint sitting of both Houses of the Federal Parliament.

This means that our Australian President will not be a politician.

The Constitution will provide that an Australian President cannot be a member of a political party or a Member of Parliament. Nor will an Australian President be chosen on the basis of money and influence, as has become the case in America. Our Australian President will be chosen on merit and, because he or she will need the support of both sides of politics, will be a person who is above party politics and who will unify all Australians.

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## A stable parliamentary system

In June this year, Sir Zelman Cowen who was our Governor-General from 1977 to 1982 said:

*“I think the proposal is good, I support it..... I believe it can be safely recommended to our fellow citizens as giving us an Australian Head of State without radical change to our parliamentary system.”*

Many well-respected Australians have endorsed this proposal and encouraged Australians to vote YES at the referendum. They include former Prime Ministers Malcolm Fraser and Gough Whitlam, former Deputy Prime Minister Doug Anthony and former Chief Justices of the High Court Sir Anthony Mason and Sir Gerard Brennan. They believe it is a fair and safe way for an Australian citizen to become our Head of State.

## It’s a simple change, but an important one

The Republic Referendum will be held on November 6. You will be able to vote YES for the change to an Australian as Head of State or NO to retain the monarchy. If you agree that, as we enter a new century, the time has come for an Australian to be our Head of State, please join with us and help make history on November 6. Vote YES for an Australian republic.

**Please remember to write the word YES on your ballot paper on Saturday, November 6.**

END OF THE ARGUMENT FOR THE PROPOSED LAW.

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