

Circular Head hosts Voice to Parliament forum, led by Liberals

The Circular Head community was given an opportunity to ask questions about the Voice to Parliament at a Liberal Party led community forum on Tuesday.

Braddon Liberal MHR Gavin Pearce was joined by Liberal senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price and Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation (CHAC) chair Selina Maguire-Colgrave to explain their concerns about the Voice to Parliament referendum.

The forum was well attended with a large crowd of people keen to engage with the opportunity to ask questions about the Voice to Parliament. The event got off to a somewhat rocky start when some in the crowd booed the Welcome to Country component.

One attendee said she was disappointed by the "one-sided" debate and questioned why both sides of the argument weren't represented by the panel.

"I really would have liked to have heard the other side of the argument," she said.

Ms Maguire-Colgrave said that more work needed to be done to unite Aboriginal communities, especially in Tasmania, before a Voice could be successful.

"A political fight is not what's best for the Aboriginal people," she said.

"CHAC already has a voice in Canberra, this would be lessened by a Voice to Parliament."

Ms Maguire-Colgrave said that the Circular Head Aboriginal community would not be represented by a Voice to Parliament.

"There would only be two Tasmanian representatives to the Voice, and CHAC won't be getting a seat at that table."

Senator Nampijinpa Price said Australians needed to be served on need, not race.

"Not all Aboriginals are disadvantaged, and not every disadvantaged Australian is Aboriginal," she said.

Ms Maguire-Colgrave said that the Tuesday panel would be the first of three public forums that CHAC would hold in the region, adding that Senator Nampijinpa Price was the first person to "jump on a plane".

"Senator Nampijinpa Price was the first person who came down and offered to do a session here, but we'll also be having a forum for the Yes, and we'll have another forum with the Electoral Commission.

"We have asked (Indigenous Australians Minister) Linda Burney, and she's promised a visit but hasn't shown up yet."

Questions asked by attendees indicate that the community was concerned about the scope of consultation with Aboriginal Australians on the Voice, the potential implications of the referendum, and the extent of powers the Voice would have.

ENDS

Article by Jess Flint