



MEDIA RELEASE: Australians want Prime Minister to act to Close the Gap on justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Change the Record calls on the Prime Minister to listen to the majority of Australians who believe governments must act to close the gap on justice, as shown by the [2018 Australian Reconciliation Barometer](#) results.

“Almost 60% of Australians want the Federal Government to include justice in Closing the Gap, and 95% agree our people should have a say in matters that affect us,” said Cheryl Axleby, co-chair of Change the Record.

In the past year the Government engaged selected stakeholders in a nation-wide consultation, however many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations were excluded. Change the Record stands in support of the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled peak bodies as they push for a formal partnership agreement to finalise the Closing the Gap Refresh.

“This historic step to make our peak bodies equal partners with Government is critical to our self-determination and to Closing the Gap,” said Change the Record co-chair Damian Griffis.

Only [two targets are on track](#) after 11 years. However the revised [COAG targets](#) announced in December do not go far enough to combat the ongoing impacts of colonisation.

“We are disappointed that justice and housing targets are being pushed onto the states, family violence and child removal targets are considered “optional”, and disability was forgotten altogether,” said Damian

Griffis. "These are critical issues for our community that require meaningful leadership from the Commonwealth to close the gap."

"The proposed state-based justice targets only aim to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in prison by a tiny 5% over 10 years," said Cheryl Axleby. "Meanwhile, our people continue to die in custody, our children are in solitary confinement, and our women are the fastest growing prison population. Almost all women in prison are themselves victims of violence."

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