

HON BILL SHORTEN MP
MEMBER FOR MARIBYRNONG
SHADOW MINISTER FOR INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS AND ABORIGINAL
& TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

SENATOR PATRICK DODSON
SHADOW ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS
AND ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS
SENATOR FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

LABOR WELCOMES CLOSING THE GAP PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

Labor welcomes the Closing the Gap Partnership Agreement announced by the Coalition Government and the Coalition of Peaks, made up of some 40 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander national and state /territory peaks and other organisations across Australia.

A formal agreement with First Nations organisations and providers to work together to Close the Gap is long overdue.

This announcement comes after years of delay, dysfunction and poor communication due to the failure in leadership of this government. It has been two years since the government announced a 'refresh' of the Close the Gap Framework, and only now do we have an agreed framework for negotiating that

refresh. First Nations peoples deserve better than this.

Labor will support ongoing efforts, should we win government, to maintain shared decision-making from a refreshed Closing the Gap framework, underpinned by a review of the National Indigenous Reform Agreement, as well as the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Closing the Gap Framework.

Labor also supports the establishment of the Joint Council on Closing the Gap which will meet at least twice a year with Ministerial representation from each government and twelve Coalition of Peaks representatives chosen by them.

Senator Dodson said, “I recognise the good work done by peak bodies and representatives in dragging the Government to this National Partnership Agreement. The peak representative bodies have an important role to play assisting front-line organisations to deliver their services and collate national data. This kind of national leadership is required.

“Should we be successful at the next election, we will work closely with First Nations groups to co-design a revitalised framework for closing the gap and overcoming Indigenous disadvantage”.

Labor will work with the Coalition of Peaks and all those who deliver services on the front line to restore the integrity of the national Close the Gap agenda.

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