

Submission to Referendumcouncil.org.au 4/5/17

- **Do you support recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by changing the Constitution or making some other kind of legal change? DK (Don't know)**
Yes No I don't know
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- **A statement about the First Peoples of Australia**
 - **Should we have a statement that acknowledges the First Peoples of Australia? DK**
Yes. This should be in the Constitution. Yes. This should be in a normal Australian law, but not in the Constitution. No I don't know
 - **Do you have any other comments on a statement about the First Peoples of Australia?**
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- **Powers to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples**

- **Should the word 'race' be taken out of the Constitution? YES**
Yes No I don't know
 - **Should the Australian Parliament keep the power to make special laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples? DK**
Yes No I don't know
 - **Do you have any other comments on powers to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples?**
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- **Changing the Constitution to stop racial discrimination**

- **Do you think that a guarantee against racial discrimination should go into the Constitution? DK**
Yes No I don't know
 - **If there is not enough support for a guarantee in the Constitution, what other things can we do to stop racial discrimination in national laws?**
 - **Do you have any other comments on changing the Constitution to stop racial discrimination? I feel uncomfortable about any acknowledgement of "racial" discrimination since I think "race" is a spurious concept based on false science. This implies my discomfort with the Racial Discrimination Act of Australia too.**
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- **An Indigenous voice**

- **Do you think Indigenous people should have a say when Parliament and government make laws and policies about Indigenous affairs? DK**
Yes No I don't know
- **Should a new Indigenous group be set up under the Constitution to give advice and make sure Indigenous people have a voice in political decisions that affect them?**
Yes No I don't know
- **Do you have any other comments on this Indigenous group?**
I will wait till after the report of the National Indigenous Constitutional Convention in Uluru beginning 24 May 2017 is released, before I decide. I immigrated to Australia from Ceylon (Sri Lanka) in 1969, and have long been interested in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history of my new country. I do not feel comfortable that decisions about the First Nations will be dominated by the votes of other Australians, and therefore want to be guided by the views of the First Nations Peoples.

- **Getting rid of section 25**

Section 25 of the Constitution contemplates that certain races could be banned from voting in State elections.

- Should we delete section 25? **DK**
Yes No I don't know
- What would we achieve by getting rid of section 25?
- Is there any point in keeping it?
- **My first inclination was to delete it because I don't believe in the concept of race. But I have been influenced by many views expressed in the book edited by Professors Davis and Langton, "It's my country".**

- **Other**

- Do you have any other comments?
- **Yes, but the online submission form did not allow me to complete this section, hence this possible duplicate submission via email. (I wonder how many citizens will be bothered to do the same.) I have, since early this year put more effort into following the discussion on this important proposed Constitutional Referendum, which I began to follow by reading Hansard in 2013 or so. I have since March been in the process of organising a Kitchen Table Conversation in my home, with equal numbers of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, of both sexes and of varying ages, to discuss the differing views of constitutional change, legislation, recognition vs treaty/treaties etc. I will wait to finalise the date of this conversation after my invitees and I have had time to read any final report that comes out of the Uluru meeting beginning 24 May 2017.**

- **Your Details**

* Indicates mandatory fields.

- Are you making a submission on behalf of a person (such as yourself) or organisation? *
Person Organisation

- **Person**

While you must tell us your name, you can ask that your name not be used in any of the council's reports. The other questions below are optional, but help the council better understand the information it collects. If you provide an email address, the council may use it to contact you about this process.

- What is your full name? * **VERNA ROMAINE RUTNAM**

- What is your age? 66-80

Under 16 16 – 25 26 - 35 36 - 50 51 - 65 66 - 80 81+

- What is your gender? Female

Male Female Indeterminate / Intersex / Unspecified

- What is your postal code?

Note: this could not be filled in on the online submission form.

- **2251**

- Do you identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person? **NO**

Yes No Rather not say

- Do you agree to have your submission (including your name and postal code, but no other identifying information) published? * **YES**

Yes No

- Do you agree to your name being used in the council's reports? * **YES**

Yes No

- What is your email address?

Note: this could not be filled in on the online submission form.

- v.romaine.rutnam@gmail.com

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