

Kate Chaney MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR CURTIN



October 2023 Newsletter

Kaya!

During the Parliamentary Winter Recess I've had the opportunity to spend some time in Curtin, as well as a quick trip to Greece to speak at a democracy conference.

The Voice to Parliament Referendum has dominated much of the country's political attention during the last month.

On the ground, the Curtin for Yes team has been having respectful conversations across the community about the need for recognition, the ineffectiveness of current policies and the common sense of listening.

In the media and on social media, unfortunately the referendum is being treated like a sporting match, with daily updates on the score and a focus on winners and losers.

This is about how we see ourselves as a country, and what it will take to break the inter-generational cycle of disadvantage. But these long-term issues don't translate well to a three-year political cycle.

We must maintain a willingness to listen, to be respectful, to question what we hear, to think about the long-term and to hope.

Kate

Voice to Parliament Referendum

This Saturday, Australia will vote on enshrining an Indigenous Voice to Parliament in our Constitution.

I'll be voting yes because we are really bad at developing effective policy to address the ongoing disadvantages experienced by First Nations peoples. When you are bad at something, you seek advice. The Voice would provide that advice, to help Government deliver better practical outcomes.

It has been great to see the Curtin for Yes team mobilising, with more than 650 volunteers out in the community spreading a message of hope; door knocking, starting conversations at train stations, and waving corflute signs on main roads. Last month 600 people attended our panel event, a conversation about the Voice with Noel Pearson, Ben Wyatt, Ken Wyatt and Fred Chaney. You can watch it [here](#).

I want to thank everyone who has been part of the Curtin for Yes team so far. There's still time to get involved, particularly volunteering at polling places on referendum day. You can sign up [here](#).

No matter how you intend to vote, please keep your conversations about the Voice to Parliament respectful this week and in the days that follow the referendum. We will need to move forward together, regardless of Saturday's outcome.?

Curtin Housing Forum

Housing access and affordability is a huge issue, here and across the country.

At our first Curtin Housing Forum last Wednesday night, 50 people from our community met, heard from housing experts and agreed that our top three housing issues are:

- *The high price of renting and buying;*
- *a lack of diverse housing options; and*
- *a tax system with mis-aligned incentives.*

We discussed our goals and agreed that:

- *secure, long-term housing should be achievable for all;*
- *policies should incentivise the provision of appropriate homes; and*
- *social housing should be integrated into our communities.*

At the next Curtin Housing Forum on 9 November we will discuss and prioritise ideas for achieving these goals.

Register your interest for the next forum [here](#) and I encourage you to fill out my [housing survey](#).

I hope to see you there!



Athens Democracy Forum

I recently attended the Athens Democracy Forum, a three-day conference where political leaders, think tanks and democracy champions examined the big issues impacting liberal democracies around the world.

The decline in trust in liberal democracies globally dominated the conversation, driven by the rise of misinformation, increasing inequality and declining citizen engagement.

While Australia is doing better than many other countries, the forum served as a reminder of how fragile our democracy is and the need to continue to adapt and improve it.

There was great interest from other countries in the Australian community independent movement and our efforts to hold major parties to account, improve transparency and reconnect communities with their representatives.

I spoke on a panel about innovation in democracy and met some interesting people striving to improve democracy globally.

I came back with renewed focus on pushing the Government to adopt elements of my [Restoring Trust Bill](#), to improve transparency, reduce financial influence and level the playing field in Australian elections.?



WA Liberal Party's Misleading Postal Vote Applications

In early September, the Liberal Party sent out Postal Vote Application forms with a Reply Paid envelope in order to harvest voters' data. Unfortunately, this is a common practice by major parties in elections as well.

Because the Liberal Party sent the forms out before the writ was issued, any applications returned straight away are invalid under the AEC guidelines.

This blatant disregard for AEC guidelines by the Liberal Party means some vulnerable voters have not only given up their personal data but are also scrambling to cast their vote in time.

My [Restoring Trust Bill](#) would ban the misuse of the postal voting process by politicians. ?The only defence the parties seem to have is that 'everyone does it'. That doesn't make it ok. ?

If you applied for a postal vote but haven't received it, please visit an early voting centre or contact the AEC immediately, on 13 23 26 or via this [link](#).



Centrelink Issues

Recently my office has had a lot of complaints from constituents about the difficulties of getting through to Centrelink.

Many constituents are reporting that after answering automated questions and waiting for some time their call is disconnected.

This causes distress for people who are often already going through a tough time.

I have co-signed a letter with other crossbenchers calling on the Government to brief us on the steps being taken to improve the agency's performance.

Electrical Appliance Tax Concessions

I've joined calls for the Government to offer landlords tax breaks to replace gas appliances in their properties with electric ones.?

*This will drive down utility bills for renters and help Australia reach net zero.?
Western Australian renters could save up to \$500/year if the Government adopts the scheme.?*

The tax break would be an instant write-off for landlords when they replace gas appliances with more efficient electrical alternatives such as stove tops, heat pumps or air-conditioning units.

It would speed up Australia's transition to renewable energy and is estimated to cost \$50 million.

I'm looking forward to hearing the Government's response to this proposal.

Curtin Calendar 2024

Time is running out to submit your work for next year's Curtin Calendar!

Do you have a photo or artwork of something that you love about Curtin? Or can you create something new?

Please email a photo of your work for consideration to kate.chaney.mp@aph.gov.au by 20 October.



Local Government Elections

Local government elections are being held next Saturday (21 October). Please take the time to find out about the candidates and vote. So many important decisions affecting our daily lives are made locally.

You should have received a postal voting package in the mail from the WA Electoral Commission in the past few weeks. If you have not, please contact your local council's administration immediately.

Due to a change made by the Council, Town of Cambridge residents will have to apply directly to the Town to cast a postal vote – or they can vote in person on the day. For more information, please [visit this link](#).

You can learn more about your local candidates [via this link](#).

Events

Politics in the Park

Date: Saturday, 28 October

Time: 10am - 11am

Location: To be confirmed

Cost: Free

Hear from Kate about what she has been up to in Curtin and Canberra. You'll get the chance to ask Kate any questions or express any concerns that you may have.

A location for this Politics in the Park will be finalised in the coming weeks, please check Kate's social media accounts and [this webpage](#) to keep up to date.

Canberra Debrief

Date: Tuesday, 31 October

Time: 5.30pm - 6.30pm

Location: To be confirmed

Come along and hear from Kate about what she has been up to in Canberra!

A location for this Canberra Debrief will be finalised in the coming weeks, please check Kate's social media accounts and [this webpage](#) to keep up to date.

Social Media

Don't forget to follow me on social media. It's the best way to keep up-to-date and find out about upcoming events!



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We acknowledge the Whadjuk Noongar people as the Traditional Custodians of this land and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

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