

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Thursday, 27 July 2023

NEW FIRST PEOPLES' ASSEMBLY ELECTED TO LEAD THE WAY ON TREATY

Victoria's newly elected First Peoples' Assembly has taken its seat in the Parliament of Victoria for the first time, with new members who will negotiate the historic statewide Treaty – giving Victoria's First Peoples true self-determination in matters that affect their communities.

After First Nations Victorians voted in record numbers in the second Treaty Elections, Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Gabrielle Williams today attended the new Assembly's first meeting on Wurundjeri Country, congratulating members and newly-elected co-Chairs, Ngarra Murray and Rueben Berg.

Ngarra Murray is a Wamba Wamba, Yorta Yorta, Dja Dja Wurrung, Dhudhuroa and Wiradjuri woman with extensive experience in human rights and community development, having led Oxfam Australia's First Peoples' programs for a decade.

Rueben Berg is a proud Gunditjmara man with experience in government through his role as the Commissioner for the Victorian Environment Water Holder and a member of the Heritage Council of Victoria.

Ms Murray and Mr Berg will lead the Assembly members' work to represent Victoria's First Peoples as equal partners in negotiations towards the statewide Treaty, which will begin by the end of 2023 – giving First Nations Victorians the freedom and power to make the decisions that affect their communities, culture and Country.

Victoria is the first Australian jurisdiction to commit to and action all elements of the Uluru Statement from the Heart—Voice, Treaty and Truth.

The Premier thanked and paid respect to all outgoing Assembly members, and former Co-Chairs Aunty Geraldine Atkinson and Marcus Stewart for their leadership and work towards Treaty during their time in the Assembly from 2019-23.

Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"Treaty is our opportunity to create a future that is stronger and fairer for our entire state, and I'm honoured to work with the new First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria as an equal partner to deliver this historic agreement."

Quote attributable to Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Gabrielle Williams

"We're working together with the First Peoples' Assembly to implement the Uluru Statement from the Heart and its call for Voice, Treaty and Truth at all levels of government to ensure a stronger and fairer future for all Victorians."

Quote attributable to First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria Co-Chair Ngarra Murray

"We must make sure that Treaty respects our rights, dignity, and sovereignty as First Peoples, and leads to a healed and healthy country for all of us."

Quote attributable to First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria Co-Chair Rueben Berg

"The journey to Treaty will empower us as First Peoples to make decisions about our lives, our communities, our lands and our waters."

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