

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Sunday, 27 August 2023

SUPPORTING THE LONG WALK 20 YEARS ON

Twenty years after Michael Long first walked from Melbourne to Canberra to put Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues on the national agenda, the former AFL star is again heading to Australia's capital on foot – with support from the Andrews Labor Government.

Premier Daniel Andrews, Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Gabrielle Williams and hundreds of supporters today joined Mr Long at Melbourne Town Hall as he spoke to supporters and set off on his journey.

What started out of frustration almost two decades ago has become a movement of supporters, who join Michael on his walk for better outcomes for First Nations Australians.

This Long Walk is in support of the Yes vote for an Aboriginal Voice to Parliament in this year's referendum. The first leg will take Mr Long from Town Hall to Essendon Football Club's spiritual home of Windy Hill. He will then continue for more than 650 kilometres through dozens of regional communities until he reaches Canberra.

The Labor Government has long been a supporter of the Long Foundation, today announcing a \$250,000 donation to ensure it can continue its important work with Aboriginal youth across Victoria and around the nation.

Victoria is leading the way when it comes to First Nations relations and increasing self-determination, being the first jurisdiction in Australia to action all elements of the Uluru Statement from the Heart – Voice, Treaty and Truth.

The Labor Government supports actioning the Statement in full at all levels of government to promote self-determination for First Peoples across Australia.

Victoria's Treaty process is well underway with negotiations with the recently elected leaders of the First People's Assembly to begin later this year.

Treaty offers the opportunity to transfer power to First Peoples over the policies and programs that affect their lives, because we know better results are achieved for Aboriginal communities when Aboriginal people are in control of the decision making.

To get involved in the walk to Canberra or support the Michael Long Foundation, visit thelongwalk.com.au.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"We're extremely proud to have been long-time supporters of Michael and his foundation – they do fantastic work in the Aboriginal community, and we'll continue to support them wherever we can."

"We wish Michael all the best as he treks up to Canberra – we all remember the impact his walk had 20 years ago, and this one will be no different."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Gabrielle Williams

"Michael has long been one of this country's loudest voices advocating Aboriginal Australians. His advocacy is as relevant today as it was twenty years ago."

"It's wonderful to be here today to see so many people supporting change and supporting Michael as he heads towards Windy Hill and beyond."

Media contact: Lily King 0499 791 387 | lily.king@minstaff.vic.gov.au