

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

Minister for Industrial Relations

Minister for Women

Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence



Thursday, 7 March, 2017

VICTORIA ONE STEP CLOSER TO TREATY AND RECONCILIATION

The Andrews Labor Government's historic Treaty legislation has passed the Legislative Assembly, bringing the state one step closer to a Treaty with Victoria's first peoples.

The legislation will see the Victorian Government and the state's Aboriginal people enter into formal treaty negotiations – the first state in the country to do so.

Treaty is an opportunity for Victoria to recognise and celebrate the unique status, rights, cultures and histories of Aboriginal Victorians. It is also an opportunity for reconciliation and to heal the wounds of the past.

Earlier this week the Labor Government announced a \$700,000 grant scheme that will support Aboriginal Victorians – including Aboriginal Elders and Traditional Owners – to be consulted on Treaty.

The scheme builds on the consultation with over 7,000 Aboriginal Victorians over the past two-and-a-half years by providing funding to support community-led Treaty engagement and capacity building.

Following today's vote in the Legislative Assembly, the Bill will go to the Legislative Council to be considered in the coming weeks.

This legislation reflects the shared aspiration of the Government and Aboriginal Victorians to negotiate a Treaty that will improve the lives of Aboriginal Victorians, and the lives of future generations.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Natalie Hutchins

"We are well on our way towards a Treaty with Victoria's first people and achieving true reconciliation, healing the wounds of the past."

"Through our extensive consultation process Aboriginal Victorians have told us they want a Treaty and we've listened. Aboriginal Victorians will continue to be at the centre of this process, every step of the way."