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VOICE TO PARLIAMENT TO DIVIDE AND MARGINALISE REGIONAL INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

“Far from being a voice for disadvantaged remote Indigenous communities, new analysis shows the proposed Voice to Parliament model is biased towards the niche values of the urban elite and activists,” said Morgan Begg, the Director of Research at the Institute of Public Affairs.

New IPA research released today, *Representations Without Representation: Urban Bias in the Canberra Voice*, analyses the Voice to Parliament model derived from the Calma-Langton report, which is endorsed by advocates and the federal government. The report finds that under the model:

- **Urban Indigenous communities would have 2.5 times more representation on the Voice to Parliament than remote Indigenous communities.**
- **Only 30 per cent of the seats on the Voice would be guaranteed for remote or regional communities, despite over 70 per cent of Indigenous communities are in remote Australia.**
- **Despite the Voice model drawing members from each state and territory, 31 Indigenous communities extend across multiple state and territory boundaries, risking communities being divided, or having double representation.**

“The proposed Voice to Parliament model is structurally biased against regional and remote areas, which means those most disadvantaged are at risk of being further overlooked in debates by more vocal and numerous urban delegates, which will likely be made up of the political class and activists,” said Mr Begg.

The Calma-Langton Voice model would consist of 24 members, with only seven guaranteed to be from regional and remote communities. Yet, as the research shows:

- **There are approximately 356 language, social, or nation groupings (communities) of Indigenous Australians across the nation, according to the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.**
- **Just 4 per cent of Indigenous communities are located in urban areas, 24 per cent are classified as being in provincial areas, and 72 per cent are in remote Australia.**

“The proposed Voice to Parliament model would simply open up yet another source of division in an already divided community, between Indigenous Australians in remote communities, and the activist urban elite,” said Mr Begg.

“All Australians want better outcomes for Indigenous communities, but the proposed Voice to Parliament model would be nothing more than a powerful platform for the urban elite and inner-city activists to push their divisive agenda.”

“This research confirms the fears of a growing number of Australians that the proposed Voice to Parliament has been designed by and for the urban elite, and it will be, once again, remote Indigenous communities who would miss out on vital funding and resources,” said Mr Begg.

To download the IPA's research [click here](#).

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