



31 May 2018

The Hon. Malcolm Turnbull, MP
Prime Minister of Australia
PO Box 6022, House of Representatives
Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

I hope you and Lucy are well.

As you know, and I am sure delight in, since 2015 the Australian Republic Movement has been campaigning for a national vote in 2020 to decide whether Australia should be a republic with an Australian as our head of state, and how the head of state should be chosen, to be followed by a referendum in 2022.

In this we've taken your advice so memorably expressed at our anniversary dinner in 2016 very much to heart:

"The less party political the republican movement is, the broader its base, the deeper its grassroots, the better positioned it will be when the issue becomes truly salient again ...It has to be a genuine popular movement."

I acknowledge your own judgement, outlined then and restated earlier this year, is that "it is hard to see how this issue will return to the forefront of debate in this country during the Queen's reign". While we differ for now on this point, perhaps we can agree that just as the recent Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting was able to prepare for the end of the Queen's reign as Head of the Commonwealth of Nations, Australia should begin to prepare our institutions for that event.

So I am writing to propose a step you could take to ensure our nation is ready. The present Governor-General is in the fifth year of his term and media reports indicate that you may be considering advising the Queen on a future Governor-General, as would be usual at this time.

We suggest that you take the opportunity to involve the Australian community in this decision and to trial a method of selection for a future Australian head of state.

You could open the process up to wide nominations before moving to a resolution of the House and Senate (moved by you and the Opposition Leader) to advise the Queen

to appoint a Governor-General – a method which would in effect trial election of a head of state by Parliament. Alternatively, you could nominate one or several leading Australian individuals to the people for endorsement in a national vote - a method which would in effect trial election of a head of state by the voters.

In either event, Australians would have more say over this important national appointment, we could be more confident that Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, women, and Indigenous Australians have an equal opportunity to serve, and we could begin the process of preparing our institutions for an Australian republic with an Australian head of state. And we could test the details of a future model for selection of an Australian head of state.

I would be delighted to discuss this with you at your convenience.

Yours sincerely



Peter FitzSimons, AM

National Chair
Australian Republic Movement