



SENATOR THE HON KATY GALLAGHER
SENATOR FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

THE HON DR ANDREW LEIGH MP
MEMBER FOR FENNER

LUKE GOSLING OAM MP
MEMBER FOR SOLOMON

DAVID SMITH MP
MEMBER FOR BEAN

ALICIA PAYNE MP
MEMBER FOR CANBERRA

SENATOR MALARNDIRRI MCCARTHY
SENATOR FOR THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

MARION SCRYMGOUR MP
MEMBER FOR LINGIARI

MEDIA RELEASE

FEDERAL PARLIAMENT RESTORES TERRITORY RIGHTS

The Restoring Territory Rights Bill has passed the Senate, righting a 25-year-long injustice against Australians living in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and the Northern Territory (NT).

The passage of this bill through both houses of parliament means all Australians now hold the same democratic rights, irrespective of their postcode.

Tonight's historic result is the product of years of tireless campaigning from Territorians and grassroots advocacy groups who have refused to stand by while those in the ACT and NT were treated like second class citizens. We thank them for their dedication and passion.

Territory Labor representatives have supported and co-sponsored five separate pieces of proposed legislation since 2015 in an attempt to restore the democratic rights of Territory residents.

Tonight's result would not have happened without a Labor Government that was willing to facilitate a debate of this bill in both the Senate but, importantly, in the House of Representatives.

Tonight, the Federal Parliament has done its job and this bill has passed convincingly in both houses.

The mature and democratically elected Legislative Assemblies in the ACT and the NT now have the power to legislate on behalf of their own citizens.

ATTRIBUTABLE TO SENATOR THE HON KATY GALLAGHER:

"This is a really significant and historic moment and one that a lot of people have fought a long time to witness.

"I know how much the restoration of territory rights matters to Canberrans. It's something I championed as Chief Minister, I fought for as a Senator and am now really proud to have played a part in delivering as part of a Federal Labor Government."

ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE HON DR ANDREW LEIGH:

“This a great day for all Canberrans. I’ve campaigned for territory rights in the two previous Parliaments. Unlike the Coalition the Albanese Labor Government was willing to have territory rights brought to a vote on the floor of Parliament.

“I’m so proud to be part of the Albanese Labor Government that’s delivered this reform.”

ATTRIBUTABLE TO DAVID SMITH MP:

“This is an important win for the ACT. Canberra has come of age, and any citizen in our Territory deserves to have the same rights as anyone in any State.”

ATTRIBUTABLE TO LUKE GOSLING OAM MP:

“The Northern Territory was ahead of its time when it legislated voluntary assisted dying in 1995, and for a quarter of a century Territorians have been discriminated against by the Kevin Andrews ban.

“It’s right that the Territories have now finally been able to win back equal democratic footing with other Australians.

“The Commonwealth should not ever overrule Territory sovereignty again.”

ATTRIBUTABLE TO ALICIA PAYNE MP:

“This is an important and historic moment for the territories. This means so much to so many Canberrans and I’m proud that Parliament has delivered us equal rights today.

“I want to thank everyone who has advocated for territory rights over many years and everyone who has voted to support the equal rights of ACT and NT citizens.”

ATTRIBUTABLE TO SENATOR MALARNDIRRI MCCARTHY:

“We can agree to disagree on many issues, but I think it’s a no-brainer that Australians in the Territory should have the same rights as Australians in the states.

“So many Territorians have been watching this bill very closely and are pleased to finally see this historic day for democracy and Territory Rights.”

ATTRIBUTABLE TO MARION SCRYMGOUR MP:

“Northern Territorians elected three Labor members back in May and we all came to Canberra with a clear goal to fight hard for the Territory.

It is long past time for the Territory to be afforded the same rights as the states – I am very pleased the Parliament has passed this legislation despite attempts from Senator Price to stop it.

I have always said the Territory does better under a Federal Labor Government and today is a testimony to this.”

[ENDS]