



City of **HOBART**

MEDIA RELEASE

20 June 2017

City of Hobart secures Councils' support for Australia Day date change at National General Assembly of Local Government

The Lord Mayor of Hobart attended the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) National General Assembly in Canberra today to present a motion regarding a date change to Australia Day.

“The motion I put was to request ALGA, as the national voice of local government and representing more than 565 Councils across the country, to encourage other Australian councils to consider efforts they could take to lobby the federal government to change the date of recognition of Australia Day,” said the Lord Mayor.

The motion was successful 64 votes to 62.

“I am thrilled that other Councils supported the motion in an effort to start a conversation.

“This is an historic vote and we can now use our collective power to send a message to the Federal Government that it might be time to reconsider the date of such a significant recognition of being Australian.

“We know that this a federal issue, but, as local government remains the closest tier of government to the people, local councils are the appropriate vehicle to gauge public opinion and it is our role to represent the aspirations of our communities,” said the Lord Mayor.

The rationale for presenting this motion to ALGA was discussed at a Hobart City Council meeting in April 2017.

“There is growing acknowledgment that 26 January is not a day of celebration for all Australians. Every year there are public rallies with people protesting against the current legislated date for Australia Day because aboriginal people view it as invasion day.

"In Melbourne this year, 50,000 people, both indigenous and non-indigenous protested. One person was badly hurt in a protest in Sydney and these protests will not stop until the date is reconsidered.

"The current date has only been in practice since 1994 and before that time, it was celebrated on a long weekend in January.

"Given the outcome of today's vote, I fully expect that ALGA will take the next steps to encourage Australian Council's to consider what they can do to lobby for change.

"For the City of Hobart moving forward, I will be presenting a motion to the Local Government Association of Tasmania's General Meeting on 26 July 2017 and soon after, we will be considering the efforts that we can take to lobby the federal government to change the date nationally," the Lord Mayor said.

ENDS

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