

**From:** catherine [mailto:candc@senet.com.au]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 22 July 2004 4:34 PM  
**To:** Committee, Indigenous Affairs (SEN)  
**Subject:** ATSIC

Dear Sir/Madam

I am taking this opportunity to formally set down my thoughts, opinions and feelings in relation to the Senate Select Committee's Inquiry into the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Commission Amendment Bill 2004 and other related proposed changes to the administration of the Commonwealth's Indigenous Affairs policy.

I fully support the right and need of Australia's Indigenous communities to self-determination, human rights and First People's status. The most central aspect of these rights is the ability of indigenous people to determine their local, regional, national and international representation. It is only through this freely chosen representation that indigenous people have the right to make free and informed choices for themselves, their families and communities.

I wholeheartedly oppose the current bill and proposed changes since they will not protect these fundamental rights of Australia's indigenous people to choice, to self-determination and to direct access to decision-making which affects the health, education, welfare, cultural opportunities and cultural stability of whole communities.

I understand these proposed changes contradict the Government's own review of ATSIC which endorsed the need for national elected indigenous representation and for greater control at a regional level.

I do not support a return to mainstream service delivery, as currently proposed. *Instead, I would like to register my support for the call made by indigenous Australians for a National Indigenous Representative Body.*

The Federal Government has a duty to continue to consult and negotiate with indigenous members of our national community.

Regards

Catherine Murphy

Adelaide