

35 Sherbourne Road
Medindie Gardens
South Australia 5081
Phone 61 08 8344 7925
Fax 08 8342 5459

The Secretary
Senate Select Committee
Administration of Indigenous Affairs
Parliament House
Canberra 2600



19 July 2004

Dear Sir/Madam

What makes Australia unique? Its Indigenous People. Yet we are way behind in our treatment of them compared with other countries in a similar position like Canada, the USA and New Zealand. It is a national disgrace that our Indigenous people have a life expectancy of 20 years less than other Australians.

To abolish ATSIC and return to what amounts to the old policy of assimilation is a further backward step. Under the proposed bill Indigenous Australians will have no real power to affect the outcomes so crucial to their communities if the new body is a) appointed and b) only advisory.

The Government held a review of ATSIC which recommended the setting up of a new body of elected Indigenous representatives to advise the Government on policy and to be responsible for seeing it carried out. Why waste taxpayers' money by ignoring this?

The Committee has the opportunity to insist on full consultation and negotiation with Indigenous stakeholders before any new body is set up.

I have worked hard for Reconciliation. Please do not allow it to be set back fifty years.

Yours sincerely

Jane Wilson