



MEDIA RELEASE

Aboriginal healing through languages and culture Q+A Panel at NSW Parliament.

Tuesday 15 September 2015

MPs, Aboriginal and non-Indigenous supporters of reconciliation will come together tomorrow night at NSW Parliament to take part in a Q+A panel discussing the role of languages and culture in Aboriginal healing.

Now in its 9th year, Reconciliation in Parliament is a joint initiative of the NSW Reconciliation Council and ANTaR NSW to bring together parliamentarians from across the political spectrum in a bipartisan commitment to reconciliation.

This year's Q+A panel will be hosted by Aboriginal media personality Yatu Widders Hunt and the panellists are the Hon. Leslie Williams, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Hon. Linda Burney, Deputy Opposition Leader, Aden Ridgeway from The Healing Foundation, Wiradjuri languages expert and teacher Diane McNaboe and Shane Phillips from the Tribal Warrior.

NSW Reconciliation Council Executive Director, Ms Gillian Dempsey said "Over the past 20 years we have seen a recognition at government levels of the importance of healing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and the important role that languages and culture plays. We are pleased to have the support of the Hon. Leslie Williams, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the Hon. Linda Burney, Deputy Leader of the Opposition for this special event."

Mrs Williams said the NSW Government understands the importance of supporting languages and culture as part of the healing process.

"Language and culture nests across the State are working to engage young people through education. I am honoured to be part of the panel and I look forward to sharing some of our success stories and hearing the community's feedback on our initiatives," Mrs Williams said.

Ms Burney said "we are at a critical juncture for our community, as we nationally debate the importance of Constitutional Recognition I look forward to discussing the importance of culture in this broader healing process."

"Increasingly the community has seen that a strong sense of identity is not only healthy but vital in breaking cycles of economic and social disadvantage – I hope we can use this symposium as an opportunity to shed light on this how we can respond as a community and as policymakers," she said.



ANTaR NSW President Kate Aubrey-Poiner said “Culturally strong and community led healing is essential in improving the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal peoples in NSW. This seminar in Parliament looks at the importance of languages and culture in healing in NSW and shares knowledge of healing with communities and the NSW Parliament.

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