



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Meikle, Kuba

SPEECH

Thursday, 10 August 2023

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

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Questioner	Responder
Speaker Archer, Bridget MP	Question No.

Mrs ARCHER (Bass) (09:52): A great joy in being an elected member is the opportunity to meet and engage with members of the Northern Tasmanian community of all ages and backgrounds. Getting out to schools and meeting young Tasmanians is a particular bonus of this job. Over the past year I've been fortunate to meet with a group of year 11 and 12 students from Launceston College who are also members of the Launceston Amnesty International Action Group to discuss a wide range of issues, including the Voice to Parliament. Today I'm proud to highlight the achievements of one of these students—Kuba Meikle.

For four years Kuba has taken part in the national speaking competition Rostrum Voice of Youth. This year Kuba took out the national championship in Melbourne, becoming the first Tasmanian student in six years to do so. All competitors in the national competition were presented with a number of broad topics. 'Let the past not rule us' was the inspiration for Kuba's final eight-minute speech. Considering the upcoming referendum, his chosen subject is very topical. In delivering a speech on how the Constitution is an archaic document, he said:

Our Constitution, the nation's rulebook, is meant to be a guide, a compass that navigates through the seas of change, but instead it holds us back because it's so hard to amend.

He continued to share his thoughts and said:

Under our outdated Constitution, Australia has made a system where education is controlled by 18 separate organisations. We've created a system where university is controlled by the Commonwealth, even though exams, from which your entrance is calculated is state based. It means that although it's a national system, students who come from poorer States, like me, still have a tough time competing for admission, but it's still a national system.

Kuba's speech continued to further look at the consequences of the Constitution and proposed his own alteration—how it could be changed. Though I don't have time to read the speech in its entirety, I'll happily share his ideas with any parliamentarian in this place.

Kuba's passion for politics and international relations also paved the way for him to attend the 2023 United Nations Youth Australia National Conference recently held in Perth. I was pleased to support Kuba's efforts to attend the conference, where he was given the opportunity to meet with 70 other participants from across the country and engage in speaker sessions, workshops, and model UN debates. 'The event has helped me expand my knowledge about globalisation and international relations, given me the opportunity to hear others' viewpoints, and has allowed me to meet some exceptional new friends,' Kuba told me. Kuba has also been selected to run the United Nations Youth Voice Competition in Tasmania later this year, and I have no doubt that he'll do a terrific job. Congratulations, Kuba, on all you have achieved this year. Your future is looking very, very bright.