



Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service

State Election 2018

Key Election Asks

VALS makes the following key asks:

- Increase investment in prevention, diversion and rehabilitation programs to at least equal that spent on detention and imprisonment.
- Increase funding to bail support services, including increased funding to VALS to address increased demand from punitive changes to the Bail Act.
- Repeal the suite of punitive Bail Laws that directly increase the numbers of Aboriginal people in prison.
- Commit to oppose and repeal mandatory sentencing legislation.
- Commit to fund Balit Ngulu for the provision of legal and community justice supports to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- The minimum age of criminal responsibility be raised to 14.
- That support for children and young people in contact with the justice system be a policy priority.
- The permanency objectives be properly reconciled with s.10 of the CYFA and that Adoption be removed from the permanency hierarchy or placed last.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women should only be jailed as a matter of last resort because of the devastating impact this has on families and children.
- The resources that would be spent on imprisoning Aboriginal women should be reallocated to legal, cultural and community services, including safe and appropriate housing.
- Implement a Charter-compliant practice of strip searching based on intelligence and risk assessment for all juvenile, male and women's prisons.
- Establish an independent victim-centred investigative body for complaints against police.
- Amend the Sentencing Act to direct the judiciary to take into account the specific experiences of Aboriginal people as a sentencing principle by way of Aboriginal Community Justice Reports.
- Statement of Compatibility and Aboriginal Impact Statements be introduced to legislative procedures to ensure independent oversight of legislative and policy actions affecting Aboriginal communities.
- Implement a redress scheme for members and relatives of Victoria's Stolen Generations.
- Victorian political parties commit to the principle of self-determination underpinning all governance issues where Aboriginal people and communities are concerned, including continued support for the Treaty process.