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STATEMENT BY DAVID MUIR, CHAIR OF THE REAL REPUBLIC AUSTRALIA

PUBLIC HOLIDAY IS A TIME TO CONSIDER A REPUBLIC

Chair of the Real Republic Australia, David Muir, says Monday's public holiday to formally mark the British monarch's birthday can also be viewed as a time to consider why our nation doesn't have an Australian as its Head of State.

"We should respect King Charles III for the position he occupies as our Head of State under the current Australian Constitution, just as most Australians respected the late Queen Elizabeth II," Mr Muir said.

"But that doesn't mean we can't continue to discuss ways to use the democratic processes available to us through a future referendum to transition our nation to a republic with its own genuinely directly elected Head of State.

"The public holiday may be the first time many Australians come to realise that under current constitutional arrangements, the British monarch will always be our Head of State and no Australian can ever hold that position.

"That also means no descendant of our First Nations can ever be Australia's Head of State, which is an intolerable injustice on its own."

Mr Muir said the Real Republic Australia recognised that attention was currently focussed on the referendum for a First Nations' voice to parliament.

"But Prime Minister Albanese has committed to holding a republic referendum in his second term if re-elected, so all Australians need to start considering the issues involved.

"In October last year the Real Republic Australia published a discussion paper canvassing those issues as well as a roadmap for achieving a genuine directly elected Head of State.

"I urge anyone interested to visit our website realrepublic.au and read for themselves our discussion paper and roadmap and let us know their ideas."

Mr Muir said the Real Republic Australia advocated for an Australian to be directly elected by voters as the nation's Head of State.

"We do not support the concept of politicians choosing a Head of State for us and we do not support the idea proposed by the Australian Republic Movement for more than 800 politicians across the nation handing voters a shortlist of people to pick from. That's not direct election," he said.

"It's appropriate that we start discussing how we might become a republic so we are all better informed when a referendum is eventually held."

Mr Muir said the republic debate should never be used as an opportunity to attack or denigrate the British royal family.

"Within a hereditary monarchy the late Queen Elizabeth and now King Charles fulfill the roles that they inherit so it is fruitless and, we believe, counterproductive to indulge in 'royalty bashing' when we as Australians should be familiarising ourselves with potential republic models and the issues involved in become a republic," he said.

"The fact is that the republic debate has never been about the late Queen, the current King, nor any single member of the royal family. The debate has always been about what we as Australians want for the future of our nation.

"The late Queen herself and other senior royals, including the Duke of Edinburgh, and King Charles as Prince of Wales, always maintained that the republic question is one for Australians to decide and they will respect our decision.

"They have taken the same approach to other nations in the Commonwealth, which itself contains 36 republics among its 56 member nations," Mr Muir said.

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