



**NATSILS**

National Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait Islander Legal Services

TRUE JUSTICE FOR OUR PEOPLE

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

# **Insufficient funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services will fail to close gap between need and help available**

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (NATSILS) says the funding announced for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services today means no new services or representation will be possible.

“We welcome all measures to reduce and eliminate gender-based violence, but the Prime Minister’s announcement locks Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services into a perpetual funding crisis.

“Nationally, we already can only support a fraction of the people who need our help, including victim-survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence. Today’s announcement confirms the Government thinks that is okay,” said Karly Warner, Chair of NATSILS.

“This is a betrayal of the Government’s promises to fix the legal assistance sector as a key priority, and ignores many of the recommendations of the landmark Independent Review of the National Legal Assistance Partnership.

“Not having access to culturally appropriate legal support results in Aboriginal people being put in jail for minor crimes that non-Aboriginal Australians wouldn’t be. This is deeply troubling at a time when governments around the continent are going back on their commitments to Closing the Gap and ignoring the evidence on what reduces crime.

“If we continue down this path, we will only worsen the growing Aboriginal incarceration crisis, and it is entirely avoidable,” Ms Warner said.

ENDS

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