



**ANDREW BARR** MLA  
CHIEF MINISTER OF THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Treasurer  
Minister for Economic Development  
Minister for Urban Renewal  
Minister for Tourism and Events

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Member for Molonglo

Mr Tom Duncan  
Clerk  
ACT Legislative Assembly  
GPO Box 1020  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Mr Duncan <sup>Tom</sup>

I refer to your letter of 5 April 2016 regarding petition number 14-15 that was lodged by Dr Chris Bourke MLA and received by the Assembly on 5 April 2016. As the Chief Minister of the ACT my response to this petition for tabling is at Attachment A.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Barr MLA  
Chief Minister

06 JUN 2016

**AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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**PETITION Number 14-15**

**To the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory**

The following residents of the ACT draw to the attention of the Assembly that the symbols in the Coat of Arms of Canberra, including two St Edward's Crowns, the motto "For the Queen, the Law and the People", do not represent the contemporary values and ideals of many in the ACT population, and instead imply the loyalty of all ACT residents to the British Monarchy. The ACT voted strongly in favour of a republic in the 1999 Republic Referendum. In addition the ACT is the only major jurisdiction in the Commonwealth that does not have a Coat of Arms of its own, using the Coat of Arms of Canberra to represent the entire ACT. An opportunity exists to design an ACT Coat of Arms that uses local symbols, such as the Royal Bluebell and the Gang-Gang Cockatoo.

Your petitioners, therefore, request the Assembly to replace the Coat of Arms of Canberra with a more representative Coat of Arms of the ACT. This new design should ideally involve the public through a public competition, with the winning design chosen by an impartial panel, subject to the final approval of the ACT Assembly.

**Response:**

This issue is raised with the ACT Government intermittently. The ACT Government's response has been consistent that changes to civic symbols are the result of strong community sentiment for change and before any change was made there would need to be significant community engagement.

The ACT community voted strongly for Australia to become a Republic in the 1999 Referendum and should this come to pass, it would be an opportune time to change our civic symbols.

I welcome the approach by the community and understand there are those who feel strongly about a change to our city's Coat of Arms. I look forward to further public discussion on this issue.