



Office of Hon Dr Brian Walker MLC

MEMBER FOR THE EAST METROPOLITAN REGION

25 October 2021

Hon Peter Foster MLC
Chair, Standing Committee on Environment & Public Affairs
Parliament of Western Australia
Harvest Terrace
West Perth
WA 6005

Peter

Dear Chair,

Petition No. 032 – R.A.A.F. Memorial in Kings Park

I am grateful to have received your letter of the 14th inst., and to have the opportunity now to make a brief submission in favour of the petition which I tabled in the Legislative Council on the 13th, in favour of a R.A.A.F. Memorial in Kings Park.

Members may recall from my inaugural speech that I have close family ties to the air force – my father flew as a pilot during the Second World War – and I was frankly shocked to find not only that there was no stand-alone, dedicated R.A.A.F. memorial in Kings Park at present, but that the issue had been raised with both Parliament and the Government as recently as 2019/20, and that those concerned felt that they had been fobbed off.

It is my firm, personal belief that there should be such a memorial. But more than that, I feel it is incumbent upon us to listen to, and respect the wishes of those few remaining veterans, who seem to be telling us in no uncertain terms that they are unhappy about the lack of recognition which adheres to this particular decision. It is for those men and women, now in their very late 90s, that we need to do better than we have to date.

It is not my place to tell the Standing Committee how to perform its role, but I would hope that, if this petition is considered in more detail, that process will include an opportunity for those remaining veterans – individuals such as Warrant Officer Bob Porteous RAAF (Rtd), to whom I spoke on the steps of Parliament House, and later over lunch, on the day of the petition's presentation – so that they can explain to members in their own, emotive words why the establishment of a memorial is of such importance to them, and why they consider it important for society as a whole. I know they made me sit up and think, and I feel sure their words would have the same impact upon members, given the opportunity. The lead petitioner, Mrs Justine Warren, would be ideally situated to provide their contact details to the Committee.

I commend the petition to the Standing Committee, and urge members to do everything they can to facilitate a positive outcome for those committed souls who have appended their signatures to it.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian Walker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B'.

Dr Brian Walker MLC

Member for the East Metropolitan Region