

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **Make civics an election issue**

FamilyVoice Australia spokesman David d’Lima is calling on the PM and Opposition Leader to make the study of civics and citizenship an issue for the voters to settle.

“Reports on the woeful level of civics and citizenship knowledge held by high school students are totally unacceptable and this must become an election issue,” David d’Lima said.

“But the problem is far deeper than simple knowledge about Australia’s civic arrangements, because the real issue is taking pride in our shared national identity.”

FamilyVoice in mid-January wrote to both federal political leaders urging them to work to revise the citizenship test, to ensure people who migrate to Australia understand our mainstream values and will genuinely uphold our principles of tolerance, fairness and respect.

But FamilyVoice also said those values must also apply to people who are born as citizens, and therefore a similar test should apply to young people as a condition of high school graduation.

“We’ve had no satisfactory reply from either party on those key questions of social reform, but they are so fundamentally important as to be key issues in the forthcoming federal election,” David d’Lima said.

“Ordinary Australians are less concerned by the lack of awareness as to how society arranges its civic system, but are deeply upset to see young people abusing ambulance officers, hospital staff, bus drivers and the police.

“Aussie values of mateship, fairness and respect are disappearing.

“In extreme cases we’re seeing home-grown acts of violence fuelled by overseas-based age-old prejudices and disagreements that have no place in Australia.”

Further details:

**David d’Lima - 0414 969 145**