Bold new solution could FINALLY solve the Australia Day debate once and for all

By SARAH BROOKES - SENIOR REPORTER, AUSTRALIA

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A renewed push to resolve the long-running dispute over Australia Day is gaining momentum, with more than 14,000 people backing a proposal to shift the public holiday from January 26.

The petition, launched by Indigenous-owned fashion label Clothing The Gap, calls for the creation of an 'Australian Long Weekend' by moving the holiday to the second-last Monday in January each year.

Under the proposal, the public holiday would always fall between January 18 and January 24, ensuring it never coincides with January 26.

People marching during an Invasion Day rally in Sydney on January 26, 2025

'For First Nations people, this day marks the beginning of invasion, dispossession and ongoing trauma, and has been resisted and protested for generations,' Clothing The Gap said.

'We are calling for the creation of an Australian Long Weekend by moving the Australia

Day public holiday to the second-last Monday in January each year, creating a three-day national event.

'This is a small but meaningful shift that offers a practical, unifying alternative - one that reduces harm and respects the lived experiences of First Nations communities.

'This proposal would create a consistent summer long weekend, with the public holiday always falling between January 18 and January 24, and never on January 26.

'It would also create a three-day national celebration that is inclusive of First Nations people, supports truth-telling, and acknowledges our history before colonisation.'

The organisers have urged Prime Minister Anthony Albanese to consider the proposal.

'As a nation that prides itself on multiculturalism and equality, Australia must strive to commemorate a time that unites rather than divides its people,' they said.

'By changing the date of Australia Day, we can take a significant step towards reconciliation and healing.'

Australia Day falls on January 26, marking the arrival of the First Fleet in Sydney Harbour in 1788, when Governor Arthur Phillip raised the Union Jack at Sydney Cove.

However, many Australians, particularly Indigenous and First Nations people, see it as 'Invasion Day' or a 'Day of Mourning.'

Every year, rallies take place in major cities, with thousands of protesters calling for the holiday to be scrapped or moved.

Aussies celebrating Australia Day on Break Island on the Gold Coast

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