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Dear the Honourable Ben Wyatt MLA

**Aboriginal Heritage Act Review**

The Regional Implementation Committee (RIC) is a forum that was formally established in 2016, representing eight Pilbara Traditional Owner groups (namely, the Banjima, Puutu Kunti Kuruma Pinikura, Ngarlawangga, Ngarluma, Nyiyaparli, Robe River Kuruma, Yinhawangka and Yindjibarndi Traditional Owners) and Rio Tinto. It has the aim of promoting the wellbeing of Pilbara Aboriginal people through employment and wealth creation opportunities and to address the joint commitments made towards meeting the Regional Standards of Employment & Training and Business Development & Contracting, as contemplated in the Regional Framework Deed.

The members of the RIC, as individual Traditional Owner groups and as a collective forum with Rio Tinto, strongly support reform of the almost 50-year old *Aboriginal Heritage Act (WA) 1972*.

We are concerned, however, at the lack of consultation with Traditional Owner groups prior to the release of the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill 2020* and the short time frame in which to provide feedback on a 200-page Bill which significantly departs from the Act that it is to repeal.

The RIC now seeks to be regularly updated on the progress of the Bill and to be involved in future consultation regarding the proposed legislation.

We note that the members of the RIC will be making their own individual submissions on the Aboriginal Heritage Act Review.

Yours sincerely

The Regional Implementation Committee