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Dear Editor

It is a momentous shift for the Australian Republican Movement to be recommending voters select the head of state. It certainly beats nomination by the Prime Minister or a two-thirds majority vote in Parliament, the only options on offer to date.

ARM, despite always having had many pro-direct election members, has only taken 21 years to shift its official position long after the rest of us had moved on knowing that if the parliamentary selection model was put to the vote again, it would fail.

Times and voter expectations have also shifted significantly since 1999.

Apart from suggesting that the people choose the head of state by voting, ARM also puts forward a method to decide nominations by bringing states and territories into the heart of the selection process, a sound idea in a federation.

What WfaAR doesn't like is that this is an imposed way of proceeding without the necessary preliminaries. We have consistently supported one or two plebiscites before any referendum to sound out the people's preferences on the selection process for head of state, the new name for our country, the title of the head of state, the extent of their powers and so on.

We do not agree that ARM is the peak advocacy body as they boldly state in their new policy. They have appointed themselves to this role and rarely involve others.

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