



## DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY SERVICES

Media Release

**\*\*image attached\*\***

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# PARLIAMENT HOUSE TALKS: A COLONIAL DIVORCE

To mark 170 years since the official separation of New South Wales and Victoria, the NSW Parliament's *House Talk* series will explore the influence of separation movements in colonial Australia that shaped our state's borders.

Speaker of the NSW Legislative Assembly Jonathan O'Dea MP said the online event on 27 July, titled *A Colonial Divorce*, will delve into the origins of the well-known rivalry between New South Wales and Victoria.

"A fascinating history precedes the 'colonial divorce' and what has now developed into good-humoured competition between our two states," said Mr O'Dea.

"We encourage people in both states, and indeed the rest of Australia, to tune in online and discover for themselves how this nation-shaping split came to pass."

Victoria's separation from New South Wales occurred on 1 July 1851.

This movement brought together people from different social groups, including journalists, town merchants and clergy, who argued that the existing governments were too remote and the people in power did not understand local needs.

President of the Legislative Council Matthew Mason-Cox MLC said learning about how the states were formed was critical for understanding how the Australian democracy and federation operates.

"Examining our history gives us an opportunity to reflect on how and why we make decisions today," said Mr Mason-Cox.

"The separation between New South Wales and Victoria created an on-going healthy rivalry and left a legacy for future generations, including the creation of two thriving capital cities."

Historian, researcher and writer Dr André Brett, who will deliver the talk at NSW Parliament House, said the date is a defining moment in the history of NSW.

"It is a wonder it is not recognised as a public holiday in Victoria!" said Dr Brett.

"The separation shaped our emerging democracy and established local and regional identities and rivalries that continue today."

*House Talks* is a series of virtual and live events featuring experts and special guests at NSW Parliament House, highlighting a range of historical and cultural topics that relate to the functions of the NSW Parliament and Legislature.

"*A Colonial Divorce: Drawing the Boundaries of NSW*" will be held online on Tuesday, 27 July at 5:30pm. To book visit the [Eventbrite link](#).