

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is . I am years old and an academic researcher at Monash University, Australia. I landed in Australia 5 years ago on March 2013 for the first time with a postgraduate student visa, leaving my home country and family for a thriving future. I recently accomplished my Ph.D. studies and now am a research officer and senior teaching associate at Monash University.

My permanent residency visa was granted in September 2017 and I am eligible to apply for Australian Citizenship in September 2018 based on the current rules. Getting Australian Citizenship was meant to be the final step of this long journey I embarked upon when I was merely 28 and left my family behind to call this country home. But, just in one day, i.e. 20 April 2017, a new rule was introduced without prior notice! The English test is not something that I am concerned about, but the time temporary visa holders have to wait till they can apply for citizenship is quite unfair. To me, it is just like changing the rules in the middle of a game!

My PhD study was supported by Monash University for four years. From 2013 till 2017, I received all my study expenses including my university tuition fee and living allowance by Monash Graduate Scholarship (MGS) and Faculty of Engineering International Postgraduate Research Scholarship (FEIPRS). After I completed my PhD degree I have been looking for job opportunities in the relevant industry; however, majority of the relevant opportunities for the level of my qualifications required Australian Citizenship such as defence industry. If the proposed citizenship rules will be passed and implemented after July 2018, it will affect the future of my career and consequently many other aspects of my life which means I have to wait for another 4 years in this country to find a proper job as an industry expert without any hope for building my life. While it is the time for me to stay and work in Australia, I have to think about my future and move to another country. This means that Australian government will waste their money and investments on people like me after more than 4 years.

The new rule can make someone who has spent less time than me in Australia (and obviously is less integrated into Australian community) eligible for citizenship much earlier than me and even if this bill will be enacted as retrospective laws, it will be extremely unfair for those people like me who received their Permanent Residency (PR) after July 2017 and has lived in Australia with a valid visa before getting PR Visa. For instance, my classmate and I who have arrived at the same time in 2013 will have a completely different destiny, he is eligible to apply for his citizenship now just because his Permanent Residency Visa was granted just few weeks earlier than me!!! Although we were both sitting and working in the same office, we were both class demonstrators and have worked together shoulder to shoulder, I have to wait another 4 years (8 years in total) to get eligible for citizenship!!

At this stage, your support against this unfair bill is highly appreciated; however, I urge you to put an end on such non-rational decisions which could devastate many families already planned and endeavoured to call Australia home.

Regards,