

Dear Senate Committee

I am writing to oppose the Migration Amendment (Visa Capping) Bill 2010 which will affect the outstanding 147,000 visas currently waiting to be processed by DIAC.

I applied for a 176 Family Sponsored visa in May 2008, my sponsor is my Aunt (my Father's sister), Patricia Wood who is an Australian citizen. She arrived in Australia from the UK in the late 1960s with secretarial skills and raised two children, one of whom now works for central government in Canberra. My Aunt had none of the skills currently listed on the Critical Skills List (CSL) when she arrived in Australia but had the determination to work hard, contribute to and invest in Australia, later setting up a local business and has been awarded the Narooma citizen of the year award. I realise that the skills needed in the 1960s are not what Australia needs now but I believe it is a mistake to only accept applications from those on the CSL. Each application should be looked at on its merits rather than a blanket approach to all existing non CSL applicants.

I have a Masters Degree from the University of Cambridge in Politics and Law and currently work for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London as a Political Research Analyst. I may not be a plumber, doctor or hairdresser but like my Aunt over forty years ago I am hard working and would be committed to contributing to Australian society in every way possible. I own a flat in London and would be looking to sell my property and invest in the Australian property market bringing at least £70,000 capital with me.

Please do not cap and cease my visa application and that of thousands of others like me because we do not have the skills that you think you need now. Please consider the long term benefits of allowing young, intelligent, hard working individuals to contribute to Australia's future. Unlike many CSL applicants we already have a support network of friends and family, our sponsors have already signed to say that they will support us. We will not therefore be a burden on the state if we cannot immediately find employment or subsequently get faced with redundancy in this difficult economic climate. I urge you to reconsider this proposal and to end the emotional turmoil and uncertainty that the indefinite wait for category 6 visas has caused to so many of us.

Yours sincerely

Melanie Dollimore