

Honorable Senators and Respected members of the Parliament,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the changes in citizenship eligibility requirements announced by the government recently.

Recommended amendments by Turnbull Government:

1) 4 Years Requirement:

All prospective citizens would be required to demonstrate that they have lived in Australia as a permanent resident for 4 years before they can become eligible to submit their citizenship application. This is a concern because the effort, sacrifice, time, and resources committed to live; work, and study in Australia with a valid visa prior to permanent residency are not being taken in account for onshore applicants.

It is hard for me to understand how the 4 years after obtaining a permanent residency are considered and counted towards our assimilation into the Australian culture and society, while all those years of hard work, efforts and sacrifices that we spend in Australia on a valid student and or graduate visas before getting permanent residency are not good enough to be counted towards our integration into the Australian multicultural community. I want my time, my years of hard work and study spent on student and graduate visas to count towards my citizenship.

2) Retrospective Law:

If a reform is needed, make the changes and be transparent so those who are considering a life in Australia now, can make an informed decision! Don't move the goal posts for those who made the decision to commit to Australia, invest their time and money based on the laws and legislation set before them when they made that choice, be Australian, be fair!

3) English Language Requirement:

Furthermore, the government has introduced the English language test as part of citizenship application according to these new reforms. This test is already a requirement for students and prospective skilled migrants who wish to apply for various Australian skilled migration visas. I had taken this exam as part of my student visa in 2012 and secured an overall band of 7.5 and then again in 2016 as part of my skilled migration visa and secured a band of 9. This test has a validity period of 3 years and hence according to the new reforms, I would be required to take this test again as part of my citizenship application in a few years time. I think it would be mere a waste of money and time for all those applicants who have already taken this test multiple times as part of their student and skilled migration visa.

4) Conclusion:

I came to Australia to seek a better life in a land where every one can have a fair go regardless of their background, race, religion and culture.

I would conclude that I stand against these changes introduced by the Government and would request the inquiry committee to consider opinion of all those immigrants who have been effected in a similar way like myself. I hope we won't be disappointed.