

18 July 2017

To Whom it May Concern,

RE: Citizenship Changes

My name is _____ and I am writing to express my concern regarding the recent changes to the citizenship process, particularly the extended waiting periods for permanent residents to gain citizenship.

I am an Australian permanent resident (from the USA) who missed out on citizenship eligibility by 10 days due to the sudden and unexpected changes to the current citizenship laws.

I first came to Australia in 2008 where I studied at Macquarie University. It was at Macquarie University where I met my Australian partner _____. In 2010, I came back to Australia and completed my master's degree at The University of Sydney. I migrated to Australia on a de facto visa in 2013. Since moving back in 2013, my goal has always been to become an Australian citizen. When I completed my master's degree in 2010 I also interned at Willoughby City Council. While there I had the opportunity to witness a number of citizenship ceremonies. There was something incredibly special about seeing people from different cultural backgrounds, religions and walks of life pledging allegiance to Australia – a country built on diversity and giving people 'a fair go'. I currently work at _____, an independent boys' school in Sydney's inner west which was founded on values of diversity.

It appears to be completely illogical that a nation built on multicultural values, would change the goal posts regarding citizenship for those of us who have already proven their intention to live in Australia by obtaining Permanent Residency. I live in Australia, I work in Australia, and I am actively involved in my community. I would like to be able to fully participate in Australian society- to vote - to have a voice. If the government denies me access to citizenship for an additional 3 years, they are removing my ability to truly participate in Australian society.

The changes to Permanent Residency, 4 years up from 12 months, is a divisive move, that only serves to cause further stress and alienation. The 4 year waiting period for permanent residents should either be abolished or the retrospective nature of these new waiting periods should be taken into consideration. Only when legislation has been passed should a law be put into place.

Please understand that this is an extraordinarily important issue for many people seeking to become Australian citizens. Please consider this appeal and fight as hard as you can against the proposed changes to citizenship. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours faithfully,