

From: Ann Baillie [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 17 January 2022 4:28 PM
To: Committee, Migration (REPS) <migration@aph.gov.au>
Subject: Ending Indefinite and Arbitrary Immigration Detention Bill 2021.

To: Joint Standing Committee on Migration
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2611

RE: *Ending Indefinite and Arbitrary Immigration Detention Bill 2021*

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute my views to the Committee about this Bill.

It is my view that Australia needs to end its current practices of indefinite and arbitrary detention of asylum seekers and refugees. I believe this to be the case on moral, legal and fiscal grounds.

The current policies and practices are unjust. They discriminate unfairly against people who sought asylum with us by undertaking hazardous journeys and arriving by boat. It is immoral to offer people who need our protection, who are not criminals, nothing more than a life of indefinite detention whether it be offshore, in Australia's detention centres or hotel immigration detention. Some people have been stuck in this system for nine years with no foreseeable solution. Even those in the community on temporary protection visas have no secure future and some are even denied work rights or health care.

The current policies and practices are illegal under international law. It's illegal because it's in contravention of numerous international agreements. A few examples from those that Andrew Wilkie MP has listed include: the Refugee Convention; the Refugee Protocol; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Rights of the child.

The current policies and practices are an appalling waste of our financial resources. It is fiscally irresponsible for taxpayers to have to fund over a billion dollars a year for our system of immigration detention when this money could be better spent on the needs of Australians for healthcare, housing and education. It is extraordinarily wasteful to spend more than \$300,000 on detaining a refugee when it would cost approximately \$10,000 for the same refugee to live in the community.

I thank Andrew Wilkie MP for presenting this Bill which provides for systematic, fair treatment of refugees and people seeking asylum while also ensuring safe, secure and efficient border management. It provides that community alternatives to immigration detention will always be preferred to detention, wherever possible. The bill ensures that those in alternatives to immigration detention have full access to housing and financial support and have the right to work and to access education, health care and other government services, as required under international law.

I urge you to support the *Ending Indefinite and Arbitrary Immigration Detention Bill 2021*.

Yours sincerely

Ann Baillie
[REDACTED]
Burleigh Heads
Qld 4220.
E: [REDACTED]
T: [REDACTED]