

Committee Secretary,
Standing Senate & Legal & Constitutional Affairs Committee,
P.O. Box 6100,
Parliament House,
Canberra A.C.T. 2600

Migration Amendment (Prohibiting items in Immigration Detention) Bill
[Provisions]

SUBMISSION

As a regular visitor to Villawood Detention Centre, I am very concerned that the Bill, if passed, will place further stress on very vulnerable people. The limiting of items that visitors bring into the centre seems nonsensical. We have been stopped from bringing fresh fruit and, at times, items such as paper with the names of detainees we are visiting and pens. Each visit we are uncertain as to what changes are likely to be implemented. The "thing" in the Bill could include any item at the Minister's discretion.

I am mostly concerned that this bill would leave the door open to confiscate their mobile phones adding to their misery. Mobile phones are vital to the well being of these poor people. The phones are their lifeline to the outside world, they are needed to make contact with family members and friends who visit them. It is important for us to make contact to advise them of our forthcoming visit. This is especially relevant as there is an intention of Australia Border Force to limit the number of people we visit to one person. The detainees appreciate our visits and we feel it helps keep them from depression and even suicide.

Perhaps the idea of prohibiting these items is to leave these people in such despair that in desperation they agree to be deported to an unknown fate.

It is important that this Bill be defeated and I ask for your support in this matter.

Mrs Carol Drake

9th October, 2016