

24 February 2023

Committee Secretary  
Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee  
Department of the Senate  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Australia Canberra ACT

Dear Committee Secretary.

**Re: Inquiry into the Migration Amendment (Evacuation to Safety) Bill 2023**

Thank you for giving the public the ability to contribute to the Committee's inquiry into the Migration Amendment (Evacuation to Safety) Bill 2023 (the Bill).

I strongly support the Bill, which would compel the Government to offer transfer to Australia to all persons subject to offshore processing still in PNG or Nauru within one month of its commencement.

Conditions in Nauru and in PNG for refugees do not enable adequate care, and the people there are badly damaged by their long endurance of isolation, insecurity and neglect. They have a right to have adequate care, including for the damage done by their prolonged detention. They have a right to have the opportunity to rebuild their lives in safety, in a supportive community where they are accepted as equals, and are able to thrive. They have applied to Australia, and it is our duty to respond.

I am reliably informed that there are about 90 refugees being held against their will in PNG and 60 in Nauru. All have been held in this limbo mis-called 'processing' since 2014 or before. Their physical and mental health is in crisis. I am sure you will be given medical reports, including on those offshore whose health deteriorated to a point where they are immobile or non-verbal due to offshore processing conditions.

I am a scientist, a mother, a Christian. I know none of these people personally, but I know that Australians need a government that offers compassion and care to those who have come to us as refugees, not isolation and despair.

Yours sincerely,

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Dear Committee Secretary.

**Re: Inquiry into the Migration Amendment (Evacuation to Safety) Bill 2023**

1. I welcome the opportunity to contribute to the Committee's inquiry into the Migration Amendment (Evacuation to Safety) Bill 2023 (the Bill).

2. I am minister in the Uniting Church in Australia in rural Victoria. I welcome the opportunity to strongly support the Bill, which compels the Government to offer transfer to Australia to all persons subject to offshore processing still in PNG or Nauru within one month of the commencement of the Bill.

I have a long history of working through the church advocating for people seeking asylum from several countries around the world over many years – from Southern Sudan, Sri Lanka (from Tamil Nadu) and other countries torn apart by war and poverty, where people who resist the governments of the day are persecuted. This is often denied by the people in power in those countries and accepted as truthful by the Australian government of the day, regardless of the party in power. It has been harrowing to hear people's stories. Their courage and determination to seek safety and freedom for themselves and others puts us to shame, as a nation, when we presume that their anxieties and fears are exaggerated.

3. This Bill **must pass** due to the extraordinary time that people have been detained in our neighbouring countries without adequate for their physical, mental, psychological, and spiritual needs. For 10 years, successive governments have chosen to deny many refugees the ability to rebuild their lives in safety, by detaining them in PNG and Nauru.

The sooner refugees are free from harmful policies like offshore detention, the sooner they can start the journey to recover and thrive as part of a safe community. There are still around 150 refugees being held against their will in PNG and Nauru who urgently need to have their freedom restored.

The mental and physical health of people held offshore is critical after 10 years of struggle and resistance against the harm and cruelty of the Australian Government. It is well past time that these people were given the opportunity to be heard and recognized as fellow human beings of worth, ultimately able to make real, welcome, and genuine contributions into our Australian society.

I am distressed that the Australian Government continues to punish and dehumanise these distressed people who have sought safety in this country and have instead been treated cruelly. I cannot imagine that any one of us would want to be treated in these ways were the circumstances reversed!

It is time that the government held true to its party platform on which is was recently elected to government: *“Labor will ensure asylum seekers who arrive by irregular means will not be punished for their mode of arrival; Improve the medical transfer process, establish an Independent Health Advice Panel to provide medical advice and maintain ministerial discretion in all decision making, and [that] people seeking asylum will have means-tested access to funded migration assistance, and to appropriate social services, including income, crisis housing, healthcare, mental health, community, education and English as a Second Language support during the assessment of the claim for protection.”*

The universal adage “Do to others as you would want them to do to you” OR “Do NOT do to others what you would NOT want done to you” ought never to be forgotten or discounted.

Please ensure that this Bill, Migration Amendment (Evacuation to Safety) Bill 2023 is passed.

Thank you.  
Grace and peace

**From:**  
**To:** [Legal and Constitutional, Committee \(SEN\)](#)  
**Subject:** "SUBMISSION: Migration Amendment (Evacuation to Safety) Bill 2023"  
**Date:** Tuesday, 21 February 2023 6:25:09 PM

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“Please accept this as a submission to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee regarding the Migration Amendment (Evacuation to Safety) Bill 2023.”

As a constituent, I welcome this introduction of the Migration Amendment Evacuation to Safety Bill 2023 in the Senate, calling for the urgent evacuation of the over 150 refugees held offshore on PNG and Nauru.

For far too long has this inhumane & politically expedient (from ~when Kim Beazley ran for PM as leader of the Labor Party) practise been left to run, dishonestly painting people who are desperately seeking asylum for themselves & their children as behaving criminally then placing them somewhere ‘out of sight, out of mind’.

There are still currently around 60 refugees held in Nauru and 90 in PNG, 159 people in all, who after a decade (because our then government was too incompetent to expedite the process in a timely fashion ~?) of being subjected to traumatic and harmful conditions in offshore detention, need urgent evacuation to Australia.

With the last Federal Election the ALP stated significant policy changes on this issue & I look forward to the now Federal Government to justly acts on this.

These policy commitments around this issue, found in the ALP National Platform, clearly stated:

1. “Labor will ensure asylum seekers who arrive by irregular means will not be punished for their mode of arrival.”
2. “[Labor will] Improve the medical transfer process, establish an Independent Health Advice Panel to provide medical advice and maintain ministerial discretion in all decision making.”
3. “... effort must be made to remove asylum seekers from immigration detention centres through community detention or the granting of bridging visas with work rights. People seeking asylum will have means-tested access to funded migration assistance, and to appropriate social services, including income, crisis housing healthcare, mental health, community, education and English as a Second Language support during the assessment of the claim for protection. ”
4. “Our objective is to get it to zero [people held offshore] over the course of this year.”

& included support for the Medevac Bill .

The sooner refugees are free from harmful policies like offshore detention, the sooner they can start the journey to recover and thrive as part of a safe community & in turn add to our Australian community as

a whole.

I look forward to a more equitable & just future for all Australians & our role on the global stage under our new Federal Government ...

Committee Secretary  
Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee  
Department of the Senate  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Australia Canberra ACT

Dear Committee Secretary.

**Re: Inquiry into the Migration Amendment (Evacuation to Safety) Bill 2023**

I appreciate this opportunity to strongly support the Committee's inquiry into the Migration Amendment (Evacuation to Safety) Bill 2023, which compels the Government to offer transfer to Australia to all persons subject to offshore processing still in PNG or Nauru within one month of the commencement of the Bill.

It is everyone's right to seek asylum, and those people still held in PNG or Nauru have bravely sought to exercise this right. They have been denied the ability to rebuild their lives in safety for 10 years. The mental and physical health of these people should be an urgent priority of the Australian Government.

I am an ordinary grandmother and an Australian citizen living on the Central Coast of NSW who believes that all people should be treated with dignity and respect. I urge you to create an efficient process whereby these 150 people may begin rebuilding their lives in safety by integrating into our communities and becoming valued members of society. I implore you to bring these people to Australia and allow them to flourish, prosper and thrive.

I am happy for my submission to be made public.

With kind regards

**From:**  
**To:** [Legal and Constitutional, Committee \(SEN\)](#)  
**Subject:** "SUBMISSION: Migration Amendment (Evacuation to Safety) Bill 2023"  
**Date:** Wednesday, 22 February 2023 4:29:37 PM

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Please accept this as a submission to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee regarding the Migration Amendment (Evacuation to Safety) Bill 2023.

Initially, I want to state my unequivocal support for successful passage of the Migration Amendment (Evacuation to Safety) Bill 2023.

My support is provoked by the following facts in relation to people arriving in Australia seeking asylum from situations where they perceive their lives to be in danger.

- For 10 years, successive Australian governments have chosen to deny many refugees the ability to rebuild their lives in safety, by detaining them in PNG and Nauru.
- The sooner refugees are free from harmful policies like offshore detention, the sooner they can start the journey to recover and thrive as part of a safe community.
- There are still around 150 refugees being held against their will in PNG and Nauru who urgently need to have their freedom restored.
- The mental and physical health of people held offshore is critical after 10 years of struggle and resistance against the harm and cruelty of the Australian Government.
- Refugees and people seeking asylum have agency and have bravely been struggling against this system. Making sure their voices are centred is integral. People held offshore do not need help or assistance, they have rights that are being denied. Centring their agency through resistance and the denial of their rights is integral.

I accept that this Bill is focused on the evacuation of people from offshore to reside in Australia until they are provided with a durable third-country solution with a state party to the United Nations' 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees or the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. This Bill does not address the resettlement pathways for people who sought asylum by sea.

After a decade of harm and cruelty, the remaining 150 people seeking asylum and refugees held offshore are in critical condition. Some people are unable to meet their basic needs because of what they have been subjected to. It is the responsibility of the Australian Government, not the PNG or Nauru Governments, to provide urgent medical care and uphold the rights of people seeking asylum. The

improvement in the mental and physical health of people recently transferred from offshore has been significant and cannot be underestimated.

I request that your Committee consider the arguments I have stated and decide to grant the 150 people immediate entry.

Yours sincerely,

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Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows



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PO Box 6100  
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Dear Committee Secretary.

**Re: Inquiry into the Migration Amendment (Evacuation to Safety) Bill 2023**

I welcome the opportunity to contribute to the Committee's inquiry into the Migration Amendment (Evacuation to Safety) Bill 2023 (the Bill).

I am an ordinary citizen who has been appalled at our successive Governments' treatment of people seeking asylum in Australia for many years, and in particular since 2001. I welcome the opportunity to strongly support the Bill, which compels the Government to offer transfer to Australia to all persons subject to offshore processing still in PNG or Nauru within one month of the commencement of the Bill.

This Bill must pass due to our International obligation **to protect the human rights of all asylum seekers and refugees who arrive in Australia**, regardless of how or where they arrive and whether they arrive with or without a visa. One of our primary obligations under the UN Convention on Refugees is that of **non-refoulement**—that is, refugees must not be expelled or returned to places where they would face persecution based on one or more Convention grounds. This covers both the refugee's country of origin and third countries.

There are still around 150 refugees being held against their will in PNG and Nauru who urgently need to have their freedom restored. The mental and physical health of people held offshore is critical after 10 years of struggle and resistance against the harm and cruelty of the Australian Government.

**Australia is a longstanding party to the Convention Against Torture** and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (the Convention) and is firmly committed to upholding its obligations. To do this, all those in offshore detention must be brought here and given appropriate care and safety.

The Labor Party has committed to ensure that asylum seekers who arrive by irregular means will not be punished for their mode of arrival and that they will improve the medical transfer process, establish an Independent Health Advice Panel to provide medical advice and maintain ministerial discretion in all decision making.

I support the Migration Amendment (Evacuation to Safety) Bill 2023 and hope that it will be passed to restore the integrity of our Nation.