

I am writing to express my feelings and fears about the passing of the new legislation. The proposed amendment is said to be a solution for the current occupation shortage but the truth is that it is nothing but an excuse for the government not to process applications that have been lawfully and rightfully lodged. There is an obligation for a government to be humane and fair.

I have been in Australia with my husband since 2005 and I have obeyed all the laws and regulations. I have completed my study and met all requirements from the IELTS test scores to my work experience. I have applied for my Australian residency and have been on a bridging visa since May 2008. It has been over two years and I am still waiting for the outcome. Others, like myself, have put our lives on hold and have spent our entire energy and hopes to be accredited with what we deserve: the right to live in Australia. It makes no difference that we spent our years working and spending money in this country, not to mention the international financial investment that overseas students provide, but we have spent years of our youth to fit in and adapt to the Australian way of life. I would like the government to understand that there is a lot of emotional involvement that we have put. Words cannot explain how disappointing and devastating it is to walk so many miles and then reach a dead end road. I cannot get a permanent job because I cannot sign a contract when no employer knows for sure when I will be asked to leave. I cannot even sign a contract for a home phone unless I present them with a Australian drivers' license (they think I'm Australian because of my Aussie accent). I followed all the rules and have invested a lot of time and money. Most of us overseas students would not have come here and fought hard to be here if we were told that the law might treat us unjustly.

When a policy is announced, it is assumed that it is to be kept and respected. Before any reasonable change should be made, it is only rational to complete the applications already pending. The reason why the number of applications pending is growing is simply because there is absolutely nothing being done about them. It has nothing to do with the fact that there is no longer any need to certain occupations.

Giving the senate greater power to change the migration program without specifying what these changes involve and who they target is absolutely appalling.

I have not only worked as a cook but have volunteered to cook for the homeless because that would improve my experience and it also allows me to express my Australian way of life and what I understand Australia to be. Having applications affected by a cap is like a lost person receiving nothing but mixed messages.

I understand laws change every now and then but this is about pretending that applications have not been lodged at all or canceling them because the senate decided to change his mind. We have applied for our residency long before the consideration of the bill. In the second reading in the parliament, it states that the difference between canceled and capped applications is that applications affected by a cap will be refunded the cost of the application. This is absolutely ridiculous as most of us are ready to pay private lawyers to hopefully improve our cases. It is not a refund we are after but a "fair go". How do you decide to suddenly pretend that, 3 to 5 years of our lives in which we really struggled, never happened. They did happen and we spent those years in this country adapting to its way of life and spending our money.

All I know is that a migration law should not be treated like a scam and if the applications already lodged are to be capped, then this is exactly what it would be. It also portrays this government and Australians as racist, which they are not. So do not act like racists.

The words "Advance Australia Fair" should be more than just words and should reflect the nature of Australians to the world: Humane

I hope you take this seriously and consider our points of view and the drastic negative effect this bill will have on us.

Thank you