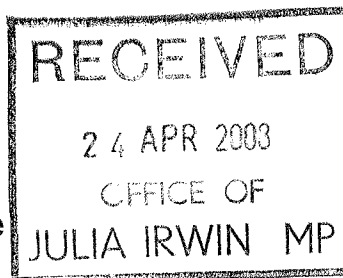




Senator Chris Evans
Leader of the Government in the Senate
Minister for Immigration and Citizenship



Mrs Julia Irwin MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Petitions
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mrs Irwin *Julia*

Thank you for your letter of 17 March 2008, concerning a petition dealing with aspects of Australia's immigration policy.

As noted in the petition, the majority of Australians describe themselves as Christian. Judeo-Christian traditions have played an important part in Australia's history, strongly influencing our values, beliefs and institutions.

Selecting or refusing immigrants based on their religion, however, would be contrary to Australia's migration program, which does not discriminate on the basis of race or religion. Anyone from any country may apply to migrate, regardless of their ethnic origin, gender, colour or religion, provided that they meet the criteria set down in law.

Australia is and will remain a multicultural society. The Government is committed to a non-discriminatory immigration policy and has no plans to review this aspect of the migration program.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention on behalf of the petitioners. I trust the information provided is helpful.

Yours sincerely

CHRIS EVANS

13/4/8