

**TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

This petition of members of the Mornington Peninsula Human Rights Group and certain other citizens of Australia draws to the attention of the House:

our concern for the plight of asylum seekers.

We understand the need for a proper processing of those seeking to enter Australia, but we deplore the present detention system in which children, families and adults are detained in remote centres frequently for prolonged periods and which Professor Pat McGorry has described as "factories for manufacturing mental illness". We believe there are community-based alternatives to detention that are suitable, particularly for children, families and other vulnerable groups.

We also believe that Australia is economically and socially capable of accepting and integrating a larger share of the world's refugees than the 13,770 people it resettled in the program year 2009-10.

We therefore ask the House to take all necessary steps:

- (1) to change the present detention system for asylum seekers so that no children and no families are held in detention centres and that adults are held in such centres only as a last resort and for no longer than six months; and
- (2) to increase significantly the number of refugees accepted annually on humanitarian grounds.