

From: Miranda Cooper [REDACTED]

Sent: Sunday, 16 January 2022 5:54 PM

To: Committee, Migration (REPS) <migration@aph.gov.au>

Subject: Andrew Wilkie's submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration re: ending indefinite detention.

Dear Parliamentarians,

My name is Miranda Cooper. I am a concerned Australian wanting national and international law, and the rights of humans, upheld. I have had many years of teaching English to new arrivals, many of whom were plucked from refugee camps around the world. Their experiences have scarred them but they showed amazing resilience and a strong desire for a quiet life of working and education. They thrived here in Australia, putting their hand to whatever opportunities came their way. I have also been in contact with men from Christmas Island through to Manus, and then to Port Moresby and APODs here in Australia over eight years. The treatment meted out to them has crushed many of them. I believe some in Port Moresby will need permanent care. Others have killed themselves.

I am writing to you regarding the submission - Ending Indefinite and Arbitrary Immigration Detention Bill 2021. I strongly want this Bill to be passed for many reasons. Some of these are:

- it is legal to seek asylum by any method of travel. Australia was instrumental in establishing the 1951 Refugee Convention. It is a signatory. This Convention is recognised nationally and internationally.
- it is illegal (and inhumane) to jail people who have not committed a crime, let alone indefinitely.
- processing asylum claims does not take long. A huge proportion of the detainees on Manus and Nauru were recognised as legitimate refugees quite early in their detention. There is no need to detain people one year, let alone nine. In Canada processing is completed in an average of 14 days, in America, 55 days.
- detaining people off-shore has proven to be ridiculously expensive (without evidence of much of this money being spent on the care of the refugees). It is widely considered that it cost \$350,000 per person p.a. to keep someone off-shore. To have someone in the community would be \$12,000 for a year even if they were not working. They could be working and studying.
- out-of-sight detention leaves much to be desired as is evidenced by the deterioration in health of the refugees Australia has incarcerated. Reports by people such as Dr Nick Martin, and Father Georgio Lucini (Port Moresby) are horrific. Why was there a ban on personnel working with refugees speaking about their experiences?
- Australia could look back at its past acceptance of refugees and check how they have settled well into our communities. Or the stories from these people being accepted into Canada and other countries could be looked at to see these people add to communities, they do not detract from the peace and wealth, but add to it.
- most importantly this treatment of already persecuted people is inhumane. But for the grace of God, it could be you that was born into a persecuted people group/war zone. The civility of a group of people can be judged by their treatment of the most needy...Australia's record is shocking.

Please pass this Bill, and free, and then repatriate these people fully. It is to Australia's enduring shame this has ever occurred.

Yours sincerely,

Miranda Cooper

