

Rep. Alcee L. Hastings, *Florida*
Chairman

Sen. Roger F. Wicker, *Mississippi*
Co-Chairman



January 30, 2020

Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade,

I respectfully encourage you to enact legislation comparable to the U.S. Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act of 2016. I was pleased to see your call for inputs as to whether your country should enact similar legislation and commend your Committee for taking this important step.

The Global Magnitsky Act provides for sanctions that keep human rights abusers and corrupt officials out of the United States and the U.S. financial system. Those sanctioned have their assets frozen and are banned from entering the country—thereby enhancing national security at no cost to the taxpayer. These sanctions also show U.S. solidarity with those fighting for human rights and democracy around the world by denying legitimacy to their tormentors and striking more than just a symbolic blow against impunity.

The United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and now the European Union have already adopted Magnitsky-style legislation. However, the lack of similar sanctions mechanisms in other democratic states reduces the impact of our collective effort. Democratic allies need to close ranks around this new policy for fighting human rights abuses and grand corruption lest we risk becoming refuges for those already unwelcome in countries that have adopted Magnitsky laws.

Australia has long been a global leader in human rights advocacy and is the most robust democracy in the region. Your Committee has a timely opportunity to further these values by joining a large and growing number of democracies and recommending that Australia adopt its own Global Magnitsky Act.

Our voices are stronger when we speak together. Your adoption of this cost-effective national security measure would represent a victory for Australia, your allies, and the international community as a whole.

Sincerely,


Roger F. Wicker
Co-Chairman