

Hello Sir/Madam,

I am 28 years old and I am from Italy, where I lived for 25 years before moving to Sydney 3 years ago. I have been a cook for over 7 years now. I received a State Sponsorship from Western Australia, to go there and work as a cook, and last July I have lodged my General Skilled Migration 176 application with the DIAC to get Permanent Residency. My application has been placed in a queue since then.

In parliament at the moment there is a bill that will allow the Minister of Immigration to allocate a certain amount of places to each occupation in the points test (whether that be Accountant, Cook, Nurse, etc.) and then when that quota is met, to be able to then not just stop processing in that occupation for the rest of the program year but much worse, actually return those applications back to visa applicants. In other words thousands of application will be just axed even if they have been waiting a year, two years or three years for a decision.

This is unfair in so many ways and is the most draconian piece of legislation I have seen in my whole life. It eats at the core of Australian fairness for all those people who have sacrificed so much in making sure they meet Australia's requirements, lodged perfectly good applications, and then had to wait patiently whilst their applications and lives have been put on hold an inordinate amount of time.

I and all the other people that are going through the whole visa process have followed every rule laid down in order to progress with our applications. We have broken the news to family, friends and sometimes employers. We have tunnelled our lives into an existence, reined in our spending, put our lives on hold, all because we were told that if we followed the rules our dreams could become reality. Very recently we were reassured that as long as our applications were in the system we would have every chance of securing a visa (yet again this was as long as we followed the rules laid down to us). Now not only are our lives on hold, they are in turmoil too. Every waking moment I wonder what will be happening next, I wake on a morning and go straight to the computer to see if anything has changed to alter our lives. I believe this could be seen as a mental torture. We are human beings, not just numbers or figures on a spreadsheet, and I wish the decision makers in government would not forget this when messing callously with our lives.

I love this country, and I will fight until my last breath to be given the right to live here. I am an honest person, I have always played by Australia's rules, I wish to contribute to the national economy and contribute in general to make it an even better country. Don't you think I have the right to wait for my application (which I have been already lodged a year ago) to be processed? I would totally understand if the visa capping bill were only be intended to be applied to future PR applications, but it is unfair in so many ways (financial, social, personal) to also be meant for applications that were already lodged.

You cannot cancel my application and act like I never lodged it. The reason is because I DID lodge it, and behind that lodgement, there are sacrifices, dedication and years of my time. Behind that lodgement, there is my life.

Kind Regards,
An Australian to be