

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my sincere and strong concern that the government is considering prohibiting mobile phones in detention centres. I have been in sporadic contact with a number of asylum seekers in recent years, and it is clear to me that having access to the outside world through social media and other online means is one significant factor which helps people to maintain a semblance of hope and connection to the broader human community. Without access to mobiles, the likelihood of mental health issues, self harm and suicide will increase. I would submit that it would be unjust and cruel to presume that these devices are used for any other purpose. Banning them would only harm already vulnerable people, not to mention further harming Australia's international reputation.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Jackson