

To whom it may concern,

I have recently been informed of the plight of a very dear friend of mine in regards to proposed legislation amending Australia's General Skilled Migration program. It is my understanding that the Minister of Immigration is suggesting that a vast majority of GSM applications be capped and ceased, even when the affected applicant is currently residing in Australia.

The idea that legitimate applicants; who have lived here for years, followed all the required processes, filed all the appropriate paperwork and spent a great deal of their time and money on doing the right thing; may be given notice that all their efforts have gone to waste and they must leave the country almost immediately - well, this seems absolutely absurd to me! I am an incredibly proud Australian, and a massive part of what makes us who we are is the immense cultural diversity and the widespread acceptance of differences. Without "immigration" Australia would not be the country it is today, my ancestors (and yours too I am sure) came from abroad and settled here in the hopes of a new and hopeful life.

I completely understand the need to draw the line somewhere, as obviously we cannot accept every single person who wishes to live in such a great country, however how can you punish the people who are already here and came here legitimately and have followed all the necessary procedures? What is the point of having laws and protocol if these are to simply be pushed aside? This bill, to me, seems like a "quick & easy" solution - proposed by people who obviously couldn't be bothered investing the time to find a more appropriate and fairer way to deal with the backlog of applications.

In the case of my friend, she has done all that is required to live here legitimately - has been living in Australia for three years, lodged all her applications and has been waiting patiently for them to finally go through. My friend is a wonderful person who has assimilated so incredibly, that if you didn't hear her accent you would think she was born here!

She has done the right thing, she has followed all the rules, and she has a life here now; she has friends, all of her family live here, she has a job and pays taxes; she has plans and a future - all based around Australia. How can you support such a heartless bill that would force a young woman to move back to a country where none of her family live, without any friends, with no where to live, having to find a new job and develop new dreams?

It is, quite simply, unfair, and more to the point, un-Australian!

Regards,

Cheree Lloyd