

18 February 2021

Honourable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Migration,

I wish to make a submission for your consideration as part of the current inquiry into Australia's skilled migration program.

My submission specifically relates to point 1a of the Terms of Reference for the inquiry:

“if any immediate adjustments are necessary in the context of the future of work and pandemic recovery.”

My wife, son and I were granted 489 visas to Australia (nominated by South Australia) on 28 October 2019. Our plan was to relocate to Australia in June last year, but we were unable to proceed with it, due to border closures. I am now getting increasingly concerned, as borders have been closed for almost a year, with no timelines for easing of travel restrictions available. Unless we are allowed to travel by the end of October 2021, we will not be able to fulfil the 2 year residency requirement to apply for 887 visas (permanent residence) when our current 4 year visas expire.

I am aware that the Australian government has made certain COVID-19 concessions with regard to 887 visas in September 2020, for both applicants inside and outside the country. However, these are not applicable to us, as we have not been able to make our first entry into the country as yet.

I am sure that my family and I are not the only ones in this situation. Based on travel statistics, up to 100,000 temporary migrants are already in a similar situation or will be as time passes.

I therefore wanted to reach out to you with two possible suggestions for your consideration:

- 1) Allow concessions for 489 visa holders, who were unable to enter Australia due to border closures, but plan to travel as soon as it is possible to do so, to be eligible to apply for permanent residence even if they could not meet the 2 year residency requirement as a result of circumstances beyond their control.
- 2) Extend the expiry date of 489 visas in accordance with the time that border closures remain in place.

My family has spent approximately 14,000 AUD to obtain our 489 visas. We are currently living in our second temporary rental, following the sale of our house, as we await to travel to Australia, which we would like to make our permanent home. We plan to do so in accordance with the Australian law and would appreciate it if you would propose adjustments to the current regulations to allow us to do so.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my submission.

Yours sincerely

Yarik Turianskyi