

24 May 2006

Committee Secretary  
Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee  
Department of the Senate  
PO Box 6100  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Secretary

**Inquiry into the provisions of the Migration Amendment  
(Designated Unauthorised Arrivals) Bill 2006  
Submission from Clover Moore MP, Member for Bligh**

I write on behalf of many Bligh constituents who are deeply concerned about the Commonwealth Government's treatment of refugees and asylum seekers. I ask that the Commonwealth respect human rights, ensure fair treatment and comply with our international obligations as global citizens.

Recently re-introduced policies of detaining and processing refugees offshore at the Nauru and Manus islands are considered to breach Australia's obligations under the United Nations refugee convention. The idea that women and children may be returned to detention centres is abhorrent.

There is reliable evidence that immigration increases wealth and prosperity in nations accepting new residents and current day Australia is a testament to this. Free-market economists Hamilton and Whalley argue that the abolition of immigration controls would result in a doubling of world incomes.


I believe that the Commonwealth Government's immigration policies are ineffective, cruel and unnecessary. Between 85 and 90% of illegal refugees have a legitimate reason for applying for asylum, based on the Government's own assessment. As one of my constituents says, "A system that punishes 90% of people in order to detain 10% whose claims are contested is wrong."

By removing all refugees, even those who make it to the mainland, and processing them in offshore centres, the Government is effectively excluding the entire continent from the Australian Migration Zone, rather than just a few islands. Constituents who have contacted me are also shocked by the Government's determination to remove judicial oversight of these policies through repeated attempts to prevent the High Court from reviewing the Migration Act.

Refugees fleeing persecution and repression, or those simply looking for a better life, should be treated with care and compassion. Their claims should be processed quickly and they should be allowed to live with dignity and rights in the community whilst waiting. They should not be processed off shore, where they are outside Australia's legal jurisdiction and where their care and processing claims are less open to scrutiny.

***I call on the Committee to respond to significant community and worldwide concern about refugee treatment and reverse these inhumane and ineffective policies. I strongly oppose these amendment and urge the Parliament to not proceed with this legislation.***

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clover Moore". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish underneath the name.

Clover Moore  
**Member for Bligh**