



LET THEM KNOW WE CARE



*I was a stranger and you made
me welcome...*

STRENGTH AND KINDNESS

Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project (BASP)

54 Beaconsfield Pde, Albert Park 3206
Ph: 96962107; barthur@basp.org.au

15/9/2020

Working for change in Australia's treatment of refugees and people seeking asylum is an ongoing challenge. These are amongst the most vulnerable members of our society. We need constantly to keep reminding our leaders in the Government and the general public that justice demands they be treated with dignity and compassion.

Australia breaches human rights in many ways in its treatment of those who seek protection here. We chip away at the components of treatment one by one as we can. This particular campaign is to achieve a better outcome for those currently in Community Detention who may be forced to find their own housing and money to live with little preparation.

Members of Parliament have a duty to listen to our concerns. We ask you to take part in this letter writing campaign.

Yours sincerely,

Brigid Arthur

Libby Saunders

Brigid Arthur and Libby Saunders
Coordinators

LET THEM KNOW WE CARE

HELP US MAKE AN IMPACT



READ THE MEDIA STATEMENT PEOPLE SEEKING ASYLUM BEING ABANDONED TO HOMELESSNESS!

If you have time, also read the Refugee Council of Australia Report on Detention Seven -Years- On <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/seven-years-on>

HANDWRITE LETTERS TO MP'S

NOT AN EMAIL!

Refer to the names & addresses of relevant/influential MP's. Use the bullet points about the federal governments planned destitution policy for people seeking asylum being released from community detention to compose your letter(s) or use one of the sample letters.



KEEP A TALLY ON HOW MANY LETTERS YOU WRITE & SEND

OUR AIM IS TO REACH 10,000!

Communicate your tally & who you have written to with the person who emailed this request to you.

INVOLVE OTHERS

ENCOURAGE FRIENDS, FAMILY, GROUPS

Forward this email to as many people as you can to invite them to join you. Make sure they let you know how many & to whom they have written letters to.



**IF NOT,
NOW
WHEN?**

PLEASE PICK UP YOUR PEN & DO IT NOW

VOICE OUT YOUR CONCERNS

Our politicians need to know now that as a society we are better than this. During this pandemic we are clearly NOT all in this together!.

Contact: Sr Brigid Arthur,
Brigidine Asylum Seeker Project,
barthur@basp.org.au

LET THEM KNOW WE CARE

Hundreds more people seeking asylum being abandoned to homelessness

Bullet Points for your letters



CURRENTLY PEOPLE IN COMMUNITY DETENTION

Are people seeking asylum, detained for upto 6 years with no decision on their future. They are provided with housing and a small allowance from the government that has to cover food, travel, utilities & day to day expenses. People have no right to work or study.

WHAT IS THE GOVERNMENT DOING?

Many asylum seekers in community detention have been given 3 weeks to vacate their homes and advised all assistance will cease. This will result in destitution, homelessness, health & mental stress, dire safety & well-being risks.



WHAT SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT BE DOING?

If they proceed, to give a longer transition period and income support to all



WHAT HAPPENED TO 'FAIR GO'?
DECENT AUSTRALIANS ARE NOT CRUEL
OUR POLITICIANS REPRESENT US SO LET
THEM KNOW IT'S NOT ON!

Suggested letter for your local MP. Make your own modifications.

Your Name
Street Address
Suburb, Postcode
Phone
Email
Date

Recipient Name
Title
Electoral Office
Street Address
Suburb, Postcode

Dear Recipient Name:

I am a long-term resident of our electorate, and I am writing to express my concern at the Federal Government's decision to evict people seeking asylum currently living in community detention housing across Australia. To do this with three weeks' notice, and to remove all assistance including a basic stipend, is inhumane, unjust, and frankly NOT the Australian way.

Can you please explain to me the justification for this decision?

How are these people expected to survive to find housing and employment in this environment? People will be destitute and homeless. The health, mental health, safety, and well-being of each and every one of these people will suffer greatly. It makes me ashamed to be an Australian.

Please tell me what you are going to do about this?

Sincerely,

Your Name

Suggested letter for relevant MP's. Make your own modifications.

Your Name
Street Address
Suburb, Postcode
Phone
Email
Date

Recipient Name
Title
Electorate Office
Street Address
Suburb, Postcode

Dear Recipient Name:

This letter is to complain about the Federal Government's decision to cease the destitution policy for people seeking asylum being released from community detention.

What harm are these people doing? It is a basic human right to provide food and shelter for those who cannot afford to do so. These people will have their small stipend taken away and be evicted from where they live. In effect they will be forced into destitution and homelessness. To do so at any time let alone during the Covid-19 pandemic is the definition of cruelty.

What example are we giving to our children with these punitive actions by our own government? It makes me ashamed to be an Australian. We as a society are better than this.

I expect a much higher level of compassion from my elected government.

I ask you directly (insert name), what are you going to do about this?

Sincerely,

Your Name

MP'S TO CONTACT

(as few or as many as you can)

YOUR LOCAL FEDERAL MP



INFLUENTIAL MP'S INCLUDING

FEDERAL MINISTER FOR ASTON - MR ALAN TUDGE
LEVEL 1, SUITE 4420 BURWOOD HIGHWAY WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152

SENATOR THE HON CHRISTINA KENEALLY
DEPUTY LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION IN THE SENATE
SUITE 503 LEVEL 556 STATION STREET PARRAMATTA, NSW, 2150

FEDERAL MINISTER FOR INDI - DR HELEN HAINES
117 MURPHY STREET WANGARATTA, VIC, 3677

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR DICKSON -MR PETER DUTTON
MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS
3/199 GYMPIE ROAD STRATHPINE, QLD, 4500



VICTORIAN SENATORS

SENATOR KIM CARR
62 LYGON STREET CARLTON SOUTH, VIC, 3053

SENATOR RAFF CICCONE
1A BLACKBURN ROAD BLACKBURN, VIC, 3130

SENATOR KIMBERLEY KITCHING
TENANCY 36 ENGLISH STREET ESSENDON FIELDS, VIC, 3041

SENATOR JESS WALSH
COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENT OFFICES LEVEL 4, SUITE 4.6,
4 TREASURY PLACE EAST MELBOURNE, VIC, 3002

SENATOR JANET RICE
SHOPS 2-326 LYGON STREET BRUNSWICK EAST, VIC, 3057

SENATOR THE HON SARAH HENDERSON
231-233 MOORABOOL STREET GEELONG, VIC, 3220

SENATOR THE HON JANE HUME
223 BRIDGE ROAD RICHMOND, VIC, 3121

SENATOR JAMES PATERSON
GROUND FLOOR, 63 YORK STREET SOUTH MELBOURNE, VIC, 3205

SENATOR THE HON SCOTT RYAN
COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENT OFFICES LEVEL 3,
4 TREASURY PLACE EAST MELBOURNE, VIC, 3002

SENATOR DAVID VAN
COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENT OFFICES, LEVEL 4, SUITE 4.1
4 TREASURY PLACE EAST MELBOURNE, VIC, 3002

SENATOR THE HON BRIDGET MCKENZIE
172 HIGH STREET WODONGA, VIC, 3690



MEDIA STATEMENT

6 September 2020

Hundreds more refugees being abandoned to homelessness

The @HomeSafeWithUs coalition today calls on the Federal Government to cease the destitution policy for refugees being released from community detention.

Pamela Curr, spokesperson for the @HomeSafeWithUs initiative, said there was no forewarning of the Government's intentions. "Last week the department informed refugees living in community detention that they had three weeks to get out of their house and only two weeks until all assistance ended including basic income support," Ms Curr said.

"While people are living in community detention they have housing and a small stipend to live on since they have no right to work or study, and must abide by department curfew restrictions.

There are 840 refugees currently in community detention who are at risk of homelessness and destitution from the decision to release them with no income support, Ms Curr said. "There are already thousands of refugees on bridging visas who are being denied government support at a time when one million in the community are unemployed.

"Many of these on bridging visas rely on community groups for housing and food to save them from total destitution. Home hosts responding to the @HomeSafeWithUs initiative have offered to provide homes and beds to refugees currently locked up in unsafe detention centres and motels.

"This latest group of refugees transferred from community detention to short term bridging visas, have little prospect of gaining employment in the COVID recession. Both single people as well as families and children will be destitute," Ms Curr said.

A recent report by Refugee Council of Australia documents the scale and cost of denying basic income support for this group of people in our community.

According to the RCOA Report, most of these 840 people now at risk are recognised refugees who were detained offshore for up to 8 years and are still living in limbo as the government has not decided their future.

Those currently being released from community detention will join thousands of others whose refugee claims are unresolved because the Minister withheld their process for more than three years.

These thousands have been living here in Australia in limbo because of administrative delays outside of their control. Refused income support, they are relying on casual and insecure work or on charities which are at breaking point as they seek to assist these people.

Sister Brigid Arthur, Coordinator of Brigidine Asylum Seeker Project - a member of the @HomeSafeWithUs initiative, said the whole approach to managing appeals for asylum is a total mess.

"I can tell you, after 20 years of working with asylum seekers and refugees, the situation is critical.

Page 1 of 2

"People come to us every day seeking help. I meet people who arrived here in 2013 and after 7 years have not even had an interview to start the process. This is yet another example of the punitive policies and shambolic administration of refugee claims by the Morrison Government," Sister Brigid said.

"There is an enormous reservoir of goodwill in the community, with many offers of rooms for refugees but there is no way that home hosts and material aid agencies can carry the load alone," Ms Curr said.

"The government must provide basic income assistance for those unable to find employment to support themselves and their families. This is the Australian way - a fair go for all," Pamela Curr added.

Contact: Pamela Curr, @HomeSafeWithUs Coalition, 0417 517 075

Sr Brigid Arthur, Brigidine Asylum Seeker Project, 0408 101 134

The @HomeSafeWithUs Coalition of more than 20 refugee support groups includes the Brigidine Asylum Seeker Project, Grandmothers for Refugees, Rural Australians for Refugees and Refugee Advocacy Network.