

March 2026



## Tell politicians you disapprove of the new law which significantly erodes Australia's humanitarian commitment - Migration Amendment (2026 Measures No.1) Bill 2026



The Letter Kit is available to download at:

<https://aran.net.au/resources/letter-writing/>

For information about the ARAN Letter Writing Network contact: [austrefugeenetwork@gmail.com](mailto:austrefugeenetwork@gmail.com)

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### WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO WRITE ABOUT THIS NOW:

The Migration Amendment (2026 Measures No 1) Bill - was brought to parliament on Tuesday 10 March and on Thursday 12 March, the new legislation was passed into law. Labor has been rightly condemned for scrambling together legislation which will prevent people from other countries where there is conflict (or other circumstances) from coming to Australia, because they may then seek asylum - even though they already hold approved temporary visas (eg tourist, business, student visas).

Under the new legislation, the Iranian soccer players who were offered asylum with much fanfare, would probably not have been allowed to enter Australia. The new law gives extraordinary powers to the Minister, who can refuse entry to temporary visa holders if it is deemed possible that they may claim asylum when they arrive.

Essentially, Australia is shutting the door on people who have legitimate claims for asylum, by preventing them from entering Australia. This means that Australia's only remaining process for receiving refugees will be through the highly selective and restrictive 'offshore' humanitarian visa program.

**Send a message to the Prime Minister, Minister for Home Affairs Tony Burke, and others**

**Send a copy to your local MP and Labor senators in your state.**

Contact details can be found below.

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Included in this kit is the information you need to create your own letters or use the proformas

- Background notes prepared by ARAN's Letter Writing Network.
- Suggested points to mention in your letter or email to politicians
- Contact details for MPs and Senators

#### Personalised letters and emails are best –

You might like to use the **AIDA** principle in drafting your letter

- **A - Attention** - grab the recipient's attention. Say something positive about the reader that is directed towards the focus of your letter. Stimulate the recipient's curiosity
- **I - Interest & Information**- encourage the recipient to read on.
- **D - Desire** - Getting the reader to want to do what you are seeking - in their interest to do so.
- **A - Action**- inform the reader of the action you want them to take.

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION - CONCERNS ABOUT THE NEW LAW**

See further detail in the [Human Rights Law Centre explainer](#) and [The Guardian article 12 March](#) .

### **Immediate impacts on people in danger**

- Essentially the door has been firmly shut for people in Iran and other Middle Eastern countries who would otherwise have been able to travel to Australia on a temporary visa and potentially claim asylum.
- People who hold current Temporary Visas may be denied entry to Australia under an ‘arrival control determination’ – even people in transit to Australia could be subject to this provision.
- The Department of Home Affairs estimates, there are currently 61,000 temporary visa holders in the Middle East, including 7,200 in Iran and 1,150 in Lebanon. Once in effect, the provisions in the Bill would allow ‘arrival control determinations’ to be made in relation to nationals of both countries, effectively preventing nearly 10,000 people from entering Australia at the same time that Australia commits troops and military assets to the region.’ (Human Rights Law Centre Explainer)

### **Excessive Ministerial power** *(from Human Rights Law Centre explainer)*

- The provisions in the Bill are broad and, once enacted, their operation will not necessarily be limited to people fleeing conflict zones.
- The Minister for Home Affairs can now make an arrival control determination in relation to a group of people, ceasing the temporary visas granted to people in that group.
- The power to make an ‘arrival control determination’ arises where the Minister is satisfied that an ‘event or circumstance’ overseas has meant that a person (or group of people) might seek to remain in Australia beyond the temporary period of their visa. In effect the Minister can cancel temporary visas without prior notice or recourse to natural justice (appeal).
- The types of ‘events or circumstances’ that might enliven these powers are not specified. They could encompass, for example, climate-related events, a new political regime or economic downturn affecting a particular region.
- An ‘arrival control determination’ must be laid before Parliament, though it is not subject to disallowance like other legislative instruments.

### **Impact on Australia’s obligations under the UN Refugee Convention**

- Essentially, Australia is shutting the door on people who have legitimate claims for asylum, by preventing them from entering Australia. This means that Australia’s only remaining process for receiving refugees will be through the highly selective and restrictive ‘offshore’ humanitarian visa program.
- In many previous ‘crises’ the Australian Government has made provision for special intakes of refugees, including Syria (2012), Afghanistan (2020). In early March in response to the current emergency in the Middle East (the latest major global humanitarian crisis since 2021), and in addition to the longstanding conflicts and protracted refugee situations in our region and across the world, RCOA wrote to the Australian Government, identifying an

urgent need for clarity from the Australian Government on how it responds to global humanitarian crises.

### Comments on politics around legislation

- While the Minister for Home Affairs posted for photos of Australia's 'generous' granting of asylum for Iranian soccer players, Labor was passing legislation to block people from claiming asylum.
- It is clear that the Labor Government is intent on tightly controlling Australia's refugee intake (currently 20,000) and controlling 'who will come to this country' – including restricting or denying intake from many countries.
- Politicians who oppose this legislation and this erosion of Australia's commitment to the UN Refugee Convention should be applauded

### REFERENCES

1. [Human Rights Law Centre explainer](https://www.hrlc.org.au/explainers/refugee-ban-bill/) <https://www.hrlc.org.au/explainers/refugee-ban-bill/>
2. [The Guardian article 12 March](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2026/mar/12/iranian-women-refugee-asylum-visa-australia-nauru)  
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2026/mar/12/iranian-women-refugee-asylum-visa-australia-nauru>
3. <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/government-welcomes-five-soccer-players-while-bolting-door-closed-for-others/>
4. <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/government-moves-to-curb-new-iranian-visas-after-footballer-asylum-cases/q4u2w1hhx>
5. <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/letter-supporting-refugees-australians-iran/>
6. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-03-14/iranian-refugees-wait-years-for-asylum-seeker-status-australia/106447472>
7. <https://www.facebook.com/AsylumSeekerResourceCentreASRC/videos/how-many-labor-mps-and-senators-will-post-about-this-new-bill-how-many-will-fron/757806647201323/>
8. [https://johnmenadue.com/post/2026/03/treatment-of-iranian-asylum-seekers-reeks-of-contradictions/?utm\\_source=Pearls+%26+Irritations&utm\\_campaign=2eae820d50-Daily&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_0c6b037ecb-2eae820d50-671913316](https://johnmenadue.com/post/2026/03/treatment-of-iranian-asylum-seekers-reeks-of-contradictions/?utm_source=Pearls+%26+Irritations&utm_campaign=2eae820d50-Daily&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0c6b037ecb-2eae820d50-671913316)
9. <https://asrc.org.au/2026/03/10/governments-proposed-new-entry-ban-powers-could-shut-the-door-on-people-fleeing-danger/>
10. [https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2026/mar/10/labor-moves-to-block-some-temporary-visa-holders-traveling-to-australia-amid-middle-east-war?CMP=share\\_btn\\_url](https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2026/mar/10/labor-moves-to-block-some-temporary-visa-holders-traveling-to-australia-amid-middle-east-war?CMP=share_btn_url)

## **SUGGESTED POINTS TO MAKE IN YOUR LETTER:**

*Use any of the points below – in your own words – and/or other points you feel are important to mention.*

### Immediate action:

Ensure that people stranded in Iran who are refugees holding Humanitarian XB sub-class visas are included in Australia's evacuation plans. This should also include people who hold Bridging visas associated with a refugee protection visa application. The Refugee Council of Australia estimates there to be several hundred refugees residing in Iran who have been granted visas but have not yet been able to travel to Australia. **These people need to be brought to safety immediately from Middle Eastern countries.**

Ensure that requests for **family reunion** for immediate family members of Australian citizens or permanent residents (i.e. spouses, de facto partners, dependent children or parents of dependent children) still in Iran and other Middle Eastern countries are **processed rapidly**.

Ensure that all the asylum seekers (men, women and children) many of whom are Iranian, who were sent offshore to Nauru & PNG and later evacuated to Australia for medical treatment, and have been living in our community for up to 12 years are provided with permanent protection visas. **They must not live in fear and uncertainty any longer.**

People here in Australia **who are still in the Refugee Status Determination process need to be granted refugee protection, and where a negative determination has been given, the determination must be reviewed** in light of the changed country conditions in the Middle East.

The changed situation in Iran also raises concerns about those **individuals engaged in voluntary return processes**. It is likely that they will be reluctant about continuing their departures under the current circumstances. Further consideration in light of the escalating conflict in Iran must be given to those cases to ensure that they do not lose support if they don't want to return to Iran now.

### General concerns about the Legislation

**Excessive powers have been given to the Minister** of Home Affairs. Decisions with such far reaching effects on people in any country, and with ramifications for our international relations, should be subject to parliamentary scrutiny – not vested in the Minister.

This **legislation significantly reduces Australia's receptiveness to people seeking asylum** – closing the door on vulnerable people instead of offering protection. We are side stepping obligations under the UN Refugee Convention. This is reprehensible and entirely unacceptable.

### The politics of the legislation

**The Labor Government appears to be aligning with Trumpian policies** which limit migration pathways from various countries. We expect more of the Labor Government – kindness is not weakness – and no one should be left behind.

The Albanese Government has not rushed significant legislation through parliament on several occasions – this is poor governance which severely limits scrutiny and the opportunity to properly consider the likely impact of legislation.

Yours sincerely,

*Your name and address*

## **POLITICIANS to write to: CONTACT DETAILS:**

### **If posting letters:**

Prime Minister: PO Box 6022, Parliament House, CANBERRA ACT 2600

Minister Tony Burke: PO Box 6022, Parliament House, CANBERRA ACT 2600

Members of the House of Representatives: PO Box 6022, Parliament House, CANBERRA ACT 2600

Senators: PO Box 6100, Parliament House, CANBERRA ACT 2600

Your local MP – find their electoral office address at [Search for individual MPs & Senators here](#)

### **Sending your letter by email:**

- Prime Minister: [Use the contact form for PM](#)
- Minister Home Affairs, The Hon Tony Burke: [tony.burke.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:tony.burke.mp@aph.gov.au)
- Assistant Minister Immigration, The Hon Matt Thistlethwaite  
[Matt.Thistlethwaite.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Matt.Thistlethwaite.MP@aph.gov.au)
- Assistant Minister for Citizenship, Customs and Multicultural Affairs: The Hon Julian Hill:  
[Julian.Hill.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Julian.Hill.MP@aph.gov.au)
- To find details for individual MPs and Senators use this link to [Search for individual MPs & Senators on the Parliament House website](#)
- You might find this listing helpful: [Listing of all MPs and Senators Sept 2025](#). Please download the spreadsheet if you want to sort etc for your own use. This spreadsheet was updated in Sept 2025. If you find any errors, please email [info@refugeeadvocacynetwork.org.au](mailto:info@refugeeadvocacynetwork.org.au) and we'll make corrections.

### **Senators by State**

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