

¹ RCOA Submission Humanitarian Program

- **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.

BACKGROUND

Sadly, the immigration has become a ‘hot topic’ in the public discourse in Australia. We know that scapegoating migrants and refugees is very common, especially in times of economic uncertainty. We also know that fearmongering about ‘mass migration’ is a direct import from Trump’s America, and we must resist this divisive and damaging narrative, which has led to appalling abuse and state sponsored violence towards non-citizens.

Demonising migrants and refugees will **not** lead to more affordable housing; and it will **not** increase access to quality healthcare or make employment more secure. What it will do is exacerbate racism and resentments, and risks promoting violence in our community. Narratives based on race differences impact directly on our migrant and refugee communities, by questioning their place in Australian society, so that people no longer feel safe and secure. Questioning the right of migrants to be here challenges our national identity as a uniquely successful multicultural and multifaith community. These narratives draw on the deep seams of racism in our Australian psyche and suggest that some of us have a stronger claim on the ‘Australian way of life’ than others.

We must do all we can to challenge these narratives and call on the Albanese Government to affirm the multicultural society that is modern Australia and maintain the humanitarian program, including the 20,000 places for refugees.

Social and Economic benefits of migration

In addition to the social and community benefits of our culturally rich and diverse communities, there is ample evidence that immigration is critical to our economic wellbeing. [See statistics on the contribution of migration to our economy here](#) . The IAG (Industry Australia Group) has issued a media release calling for the maintenance of the current skilled migration program, and “*a public communication strategy that better explains how skilled migration supports essential services, infrastructure delivery and economic growth*”. See details here: [Australian Industry Group calls for stability and reform on skilled migration | Australian Industry Group](#)

Proposal for a national Summit on Immigration

A coalition of business and civil society organisations is calling on the Australian Government to convene a National Migration Summit this year, bringing together key stakeholders to address community concerns, build confidence in Australia’s migration system and develop a long-term migration strategy that serves the nation’s economic and social interests.

Migration is too important to be left to reactive policymaking or political bidding wars. The challenges are too important, and the opportunities too significant.

Supporters include ACOSS (Australian Council of Social Services), Council of Small Business Organisations of Australia, Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia, the Minerals Council of Australia, Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia, Settlement Services International (SSI), the Migration Institute of Australia, Refugee Council of Australia and many others.

If you belong to an organisation or community group, you can sign on here to a letter calling for a [national migration summit](#) .

Refugee Program and rights for people seeking asylum

We know that Labor is proposing to make it harder for people seeking asylum by restricting their work rights, as well as restricting their right to appeal negative decisions, and making family reunion even more difficult. It is also understood that Minister Burke was contemplating reducing the refugee intake (currently 20,000) to 13,750. See [Article in The Guardian 26 August 2026](#)

A reduction in the refugee quota would be contrary to Labor's 2022 election commitment to progressively increase the intake towards 27,000, and in conflict with a commitment made at the recent ALP National Conference to maintain the quota at 20,000. The good news is that [on 27 August, PM Albanese overruled the Minister and committed to maintain the quota at 20,000](#). It is very likely that lobbying by refugee supporters had an impact on this decision.

The 2026 Refugee Council of Australia's [Submission on the Humanitarian Program](#) urges the government to maintain the current quota and provides a comprehensive assessment of the refugee program and proposes a number of strategies to strengthen and enhance the program. The submission calls on the government to: Address racism and support social cohesion by prioritising implementation of recommendations made in its [National Anti-Racism Framework](#) and the [Multicultural Framework Review](#)

Suggested points to including in your letter /email to politicians, calling on the Australian government to:

- Explain why you think immigration is important for Australia
- Indicate your support for the call for a National Summit on Migration
- Urge politicians to resist the negative narrative on immigration, and affirm the importance of migrants for our communities and economy
- Reject the politics of division and fear
- Explain why you want to see the Refugee Program and current annual quota maintained, and to ensure they maintain work rights and the right to appeal Departmental decisions
- For Labor politicians - Urge them to take responsibility for leading a positive and constructive public discussion on immigration.

SAMPLE LETTER

Dear Minister/local MP/Senator

Remember to make this letter your own, drawing on the suggested points above

Ask local MPs and senators to convey your concerns to the PM and relevant Ministers

.....

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Yours sincerely

[Name]

[residential address and email]

If you are posting a letter, either print off, sign and send, or hand write your letter.

If you are emailing, just copy the letter into an email – remember to sign off with your name and address, so it is clear you are a constituent (can be checked against the electoral roll)

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:

- Minister Home Affairs, The Hon Tony Burke: Tony.Burke.mp@aph.gov.au
- Assistant Minister Immigration, The Hon Matt Thistlethwaite
Matt.Thistlethwaite.MP@aph.gov.au
- Assistant Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs, The Hon Julian Hill
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 Aug 2026](#) . 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 and we'll make corrections.

Senators by State

ACT: ALP: senator.katy.gallagher@aph.gov.au;
IND: senator.david.pocock@aph.gov.au;

NSW: ALP : senator.ayres@aph.gov.au; senator.mcallister@aph.gov.au;
senator.oneill@aph.gov.au; senator.sheldon@aph.gov.au;
GREENS: senator.faruqi@aph.gov.au; senator.shoebridge@aph.gov.au;
LIBERAL: senator.bragg@aph.gov.au; senator.kovacic@aph.gov.au;
senator.sharma@aph.gov.au;
NATS: senator.cadell@aph.gov.au

NT: ALP: Senator.McCarthy@aph.gov.au;
LIBERAL: senator.nampijinpaprice@aph.gov.au;

QLD: ALP: senator.chisholm@aph.gov.au; senator.mulholland@aph.gov.au;
senator.green@aph.gov.au; senator.watt@aph.gov.au;
GREENS: senator.allman-payne@aph.gov.au; senator.waters@aph.gov.au;
LNP: senator.mcdonald@aph.gov.au; senator.mcgrath@aph.gov.au;
senator.scarr@aph.gov.au;
PHON: senator.hanson@aph.gov.au; senator.roberts@aph.gov.au;

SA: ALP: senator.walker@aph.gov.au; senator.farrell@aph.gov.au;
senator.grogan@aph.gov.au; senator.marielle.smith@aph.gov.au;
senator.wong@aph.gov.au; senator.walker@aph.gov.au;
GREENS: senator.hanson-young@aph.gov.au; senator.pocock@aph.gov.au;
LIBERAL: senator.antic@aph.gov.au; senator.blyth@aph.gov.au; senator.liddle@aph.gov.au;
senator.mclachlan@aph.gov.au; senator.ruston@aph.gov.au;

TAS: ALP: senator.bilyk@aph.gov.au; [senator.; carol.brown@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.carol.brown@aph.gov.au);
senator.polley@aph.gov.au; senator.urquhart@aph.gov.au; senator.dowling@aph.gov.au;
senator.dolega@aph.gov.au;
GREENS: senator.mckim@aph.gov.au; senator.whish-wilson@aph.gov.au;
senator.bleyer@aph.gov.au;
LIBERAL: senator.chandler@aph.gov.au; senator.colbeck@aph.gov.au;
senator.duniam@aph.gov.au; senator.gatenby@aph.gov.au;
JLN: senator.lambie@aph.gov.au;
IND: senator.tyrrell@aph.gov.au;

VIC: ALP: senator.cicccone@aph.gov.au; senator.darmanin@aph.gov.au;
senator.stewart@aph.gov.au; senator.walsh@aph.gov.au; senator.ananda-rajah@aph.gov.au;
GREENS: senator.hodgins-may@aph.gov.au;
IND: senator.thorpe@aph.gov.au;
LIBERAL: senator.henderson@aph.gov.au; senator.hume@aph.gov.au;
senator.paterson@aph.gov.au;
NATS: senator.mckenzie@aph.gov.au;
UAP: senator.babet@aph.gov.au;

WA: ALP: senator.cox@aph.gov.au; senator.ghosh@aph.gov.au; senator.lines@aph.gov.au;
senator.sterle@aph.gov.au; senator.whiteaker@aph.gov.au;
IND: senator.payman@aph.gov.au;
GREENS: senator.steele-john@aph.gov.au;

LIBERAL: senator.brockman@aph.gov.au; senator.cash@aph.gov.au;
senator.matt.o'sullivan@aph.gov.au; senator.smith@aph.gov.au;

PROGRESSIVE INDEPENDENTS

Allegra Spender allegra.spender.mp@aph.gov.au Suite 302 Level 3 179-191 New South Head Road, Edgecliff (PO Box 545) NSW

Andrew Wilkie Andrew.Wilkie.MP@aph.gov.au 188 Collins St Hobart Tas 7001 (PO Box 32)

David Pocock Senator.David.Pocock@aph.gov.au PO Box 705 Gungahlin ACT 2912

Dr Monique Ryan Monique.Ryan.MP@aph.gov.au 105 Camberwell Rd Hawthorn East VIC 3123 (PO Box 1227)

Dr Sophie Scamps Sophie.Scamps.Mp@aph.gov.au PO Box 523 Narrabeen NSW 2101

Fatima Payman senator.payman@aph.gov.au GPO Box B58, Perth WA 6838

Kate Chaney kate.chaney.mp@aph.gov.au 98/ 5 Howtree Place, Floreat WA 6014 (PO Box 186 Floreat 6014)

Lidia Thorpe senator.thorpe@aph.gov.au 474 Smith St, Collingwood VIC 3066 (PO Box 1526)

Nicolette Boele nicolette.boele.mp@aph.gov.au; Suite 1, Level 2, 280 Pacific Highway, Lindfield, NSW 2070

Zali Steggall Zali.steggall.mp@aph.gov.au; P O Box 450, Manly, NSW 2095

GREENS POLITICIANS

Leader of the Australian Greens: - Senator Larissa Waters (Qld): senator.waters@aph.gov.au

Senator David Shoebridge (NSW): senator.shoebridge@aph.gov.au