Salutation

I am/We are writing to request that you will block the proposed legislation changes by the Government to prevent people who are detained on Manus Island and in Nauru from ever being able to come to Australia either as a visitor, or for study or business purposes.

This proposed change in legislation puts Australia at risk of contravening International law and the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1967 UN Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, and the 2010 UNHCR Introductory note to the Convention.

This proposed change is an assault on the humanity of the people affected by war and persecution in their homelands. It is also an affront to Australians who feel deeply that we are lacking in compassion for people who have fled such situations. It is not enough for members of Parliament to merely describe this proposed action as ludicrous or unpalatable. Appropriate actions need to be taken so that those who have come to Australia in search of asylum are treated with dignity and compassion.

The treatment of people in offshore detention centres, provided at great financial cost to the Australian tax payer, has placed those on Nauru and Manus Island in a situation that seems to be hopeless. Consequently, innocent people have been condemned to depression and despair, and many have resorted to self-harm. To punish one group of people in order to send a ‘message’ is inhumane, unjust and immoral. Australia has a moral and human responsibility to protect those fleeing persecution, however they have arrived in Australia.

I entreat you to take a stand for the sake of compassion and humanity, and block this proposed legislation.

Yours sincerely