

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT MAYORAL TASKFORCE
SUPPORTING PEOPLE SEEKING ASYLUM**

**BACK YOUR
NEIGHBOUR**

To: The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister of Australia
CC: The Hon Alex Hawke MP, Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs
Senator The Hon Ann Ruston, Minister for Families and Social Services
The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, Treasurer of Australia

Monday 28 March 2022

Dear Prime Minister,

The undersigned mayors from local governments across Australia are seeking your urgent intervention to provide certainty, stability and support for over 100,000 people who are living in the Australian community without the basic support and safety they need to build their lives. Some have been waiting almost a decade for their refugee status to be resolved.

We call on you to:

1. Allocate funding and resources to urgently clear the large backlog of refugee claims and appeals
2. Provide access to Medicare, income support, employment and other services for those waiting for a determination
3. Reform Australia's humanitarian protection system to create a single Refugee Status Determination (RSD) process with an independent, timely and fair merits review
4. Implement a permanent protection visa for people with refugee status, replacing temporary protection visas

Currently, many of these individuals and families are attempting to survive without financial, health or social support. This puts people at risk of harm and undermines their ability to contribute to the Australian community through work, education, skills development and community participation.

The systematic failure of the RSD and settlement support system is placing increasingly unsustainable pressure on local councils to fill the gaps in unfunded community services. The slow and inefficient processing of claims and subsequent lack of support is driving major cost-shifting from funded service sectors to local councils and charities.

The Federal Government has an opportunity to correct this situation through funding targeted at the social and economic needs of this group. We are asking the Federal Government to act on this as a national priority.

Targeted funding must also be provided to clear the backlog of claims and appeals within a short timeframe, which will provide a wide range of individual and community benefits.

These important initiatives to Australia's humanitarian protection system, will provide greater safety and stability to people building lives in Australia after significant trauma and displacement. They will also help strengthen the social and economic recovery of local communities from the pandemic.

The signatories to this letter represent diverse communities right across the country and we stand united our call for the Federal Government to provide a stronger response to people seeking asylum in Australia. There is too much at stake for vulnerable community members and the communities that our local governments represent for continued inaction.



Mayor Cr Jim Memeti

On behalf of the Local Government Mayoral Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum
& Back Your Neighbour Campaign

The Local Government Mayoral Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum and the joint mayoral letter are supported by the following councils and/or mayors:

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| Ballarat City Council (VIC) | Melbourne City Council (VIC) |
| Banyule City Council (VIC) | Mayor, Mitcham City Council (SA) |
| Bass Coast Shire Council (VIC) | Monash City Council (VIC) |
| Greater Bendigo City Council (VIC) | Lord Mayor, Sydney City Council (NSW) |
| Mayor, Blacktown City Council (NSW) | Macedon Ranges Shire Council (VIC) |
| Blue Mountains City Council (NSW) | Maribyrnong City Council (VIC) |
| Brimbank City Council (VIC) | Maroondah City Council (VIC) |
| Canterbury-Bankstown City Council (NSW) | Melbourne City Council (VIC) |
| Cardinia Shire Council (VIC) | Moonee Valley City Council (VIC) |
| Casey City Council (VIC) | Moreland City Council (VIC) |
| Mayor, Glen Eira City Council (VIC) | Mornington Peninsula Shire Council (VIC) |
| Mayor, Golden Plains Shire (VIC) | Newcastle City Council (NSW) |
| Greater Dandenong City Council (VIC) | Nillumbik Shire Council (VIC) |
| Darebin City Council (VIC) | Port Phillip City Council (VIC) |
| Greater Geelong City Council (VIC) | Mayor, Prospect City Council (SA) |
| Hawkesbury City Council (NSW) | Queenscliffe Borough Council (VIC) |
| Hobart City Council (TAS) | Randwick City Council (NSW) |
| Hobsons Bay City Council (VIC) | Wagga Wagga City Council (NSW) |
| Hume City Council (VIC) | Wellington Shire Council (VIC) |
| Inner West City Council (NSW) | Whitehorse City Council (VIC) |
| Kingston City Council (VIC) | Whittlesea City Council (VIC) |
| Leeton Shire Council (NSW) | Lord Mayor, Wollongong City Council (NSW) |
| Lord Mayor, Launceston City Council (TAS) | Wyndham City Council (VIC) |
| Macedon Ranges Shire Council (VIC) | Yarra City Council (VIC) |
| Maroondah City Council (VIC) | |