

SAMPLE letter for Fair Process & Permanent Visas referencing the protest – updated 6 August

## SAMPLE LETTER to Minister Burke, the PM, MPs and Senators – referencing the refugee protest

*Advocacy groups and individuals are encouraged to send to Minister Home Affairs & Immigration, The Hon Tony Burke, and copy the PM, and local members (Independent, Greens and Labor) and/or federal Senators in your state (Independent, Greens and Labor)*

Emails:

Use [Contact form for Minister Home Affairs & Immigration](#) (Minister Burke)

Use contact form for the PM <https://www.pm.gov.au/contact>

See contacts of other politicians here: [Full list of Federal Senators and MPs June 2024](#)

Letters can be sent to electoral offices – find details here: [https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators\\_and\\_Members/Members](https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Members)

*It's a good idea to make some changes to the wording – say it in your own words, so that each letter is a bit different.*

**Note** – change paragraph for letters to non-Labor politicians (instead of the grey shaded paragraph below) .... Use something like this: ..... Please urge the Federal Government to urgently provide a robust merits review process for all those who have been denied protection under Fast Track. The Government should also allow them to apply for any other permanent visa where they meet the requirements.

Dear Minister Burke

You may have heard that people denied protection under FastTrack have established a rolling protest outside the Home Affairs office in the middle of a freezing Melbourne winter - this protest commenced on 15 July and is continuing with support from many concerned community members. On 12 August people similarly denied protection in Sydney commenced a similar protest at your office.

After 12 long years of uncertainty these people need to know that they and their families, and the thousands they represent, can live safely and permanently in Australia.

As you know, the Fast Track process was introduced by the Abbott Government to fail people seeking asylum – and it has. Now, 12 years later, over 9,000 people still do not have permanent visas - they have been denied a fair assessment of their claims for refugee protection. Despite these difficulties, they are making a contribution and raising their children as young Australians.

These people have been caught in a flawed system and rightly have no confidence in decisions received about their refugee claims:

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- They are issued short term bridging visas, some without the right to work and many endure long periods without access to Medicare.
- They live with the heartache and anxiety of being separated for years from loved ones who are still in situations of great uncertainty or danger. Most young people on a bridging visa cannot study at university, even though they have done all their schooling in Australia.
- None can access the safety net of Centrelink supports and increasing numbers of people are at risk of homelessness.

After living in our communities for 12 years, these people need the peace of mind and security of a permanent visa.

In opposition, Labor acknowledged that the Fast Track process was flawed and unfair. The 2023 ALP Policy Platform states: *“The assessment and review of protection claims will be underpinned by robust, efficient and transparent processes that ensure fair and consistent outcomes, including access to review which allows for the consideration of additional material, and access to independent advice. The highest priority will be allocated to action the orderly and fair resolution of the backlog of cases subjected to the fast-track assessment process.”*

I urge the Labor Government to urgently provide a robust merits review process for all those who have been denied protection under Fast Track. The Government should also allow them to apply for any other permanent visa where they meet the requirements.

Providing a fair process to permanency is imperative for individuals and families to confidently build their lives here and be properly recognised as members of our communities. After living in a terrible limbo for 12 years, they need the certainty of a safe and secure future now.

Please listen to the concerns of those who are protesting, and establish a fair process for all those stuck in limbo for more than 12 years. Please give this matter your priority attention.

Yours sincerely

(Name)

(Address)