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Issue for August 2023

Labor's Refugee Policies

Available to download at –

- <https://aran.net.au/resources/letter-writing/>
- <https://ruralaustraliansforrefugees.org.au/write-a-letter>

They Vote For You

Clare O'Neil voted
for implementing
refugee and protection
conventions

theyvoteforyou.org.au/

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

- Guide and Background notes prepared by ARAN's Letter Writing Network.
- Postal Addresses for MPs and Senators
- Email addresses for MPs and Senators
- A proforma letter that you can copy (and personalise) to send by post or email.

Personalised letters are best –

- You might like to use the **AIDA** principle
 - **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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Regards,  
The ARAN Letter Writing Network  
[austrefugeenetwork@gmail.com](mailto:austrefugeenetwork@gmail.com)

## Labor's Refugee Policies

### Why it is important to write on this issue now

We are asking people to write to **ALP politicians** before the ALP Conference to make sure they know that we expect this government to make good on its promise to change the tone of politics and to deliver fair and humane refugee policy.

From 17-19 August the ALP is holding its bi-annual National Conference, the Labor Party's highest decision-making forum, in Brisbane. The ALP was elected to government in May 2022 with a substantial policy platform, including promised changes to the treatment of refugees and people seeking asylum. Immigration Minister Andrew Giles has committed to implementing that platform.

PM Albanese describes his government as a government of action, one that wants to make a difference. Thus far, indications from this government are of good intentions, but real changes so far have been slow coming and somewhat minimal. Progress is slow.

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### Background Information

The [2023 Draft National Platform](#) has been released in the lead-up to ALP National Conference 17-19 August.

### Key features of Labor's Draft National Platform and actions in relation to refugee policies

The Platform acknowledges that *Under the Refugee Convention, people seeking asylum have the right to seek protection and asylum and, regardless of the mode of arrival, this is not illegal under Australian or international law. Furthermore, it states that we will treat people seeking our protection with dignity and compassion in accordance with our international obligations, the rule of law and the principles of fairness. Labor believes as a nation we must not harm people seeking refuge.*

The Platform recognizes that *a fundamental principle in treating those seeking protection with humanity is to provide as much certainty as possible.*

### Positive changes by the Albanese Government so far

- Around 19,000 people have been given opportunity to transition from TPVs and SHEVs to permanent protection in Australia, but progress is slow.
- Some barriers to applying for family reunion have been removed for people who arrived by boat before 2013.
- All remaining people held on Nauru have been evacuated to Australia.
- A number of people who had been in onshore detention many years have been released onto Bridging Visas.

### Disappointing aspects

- Those who arrived by boat, especially those arriving after 19 July 2013, continue to be punished and treated differently because of their mode of arrival. The ALP's 2023 Platform no longer commits to ensuring (as it did in the 2021 Platform) that people arriving by irregular means will not be punished for their mode of arrival. So all those subjected to offshore detention will still be refused permanent resettlement here.
- The approximately 10,000 people in the Legacy caseload who arrived by boat before 2013 are living in the Australian community on Bridging Visas, but most have been denied permanent protection, with many in protracted appeal processes with no secure resettlement options.
- While Labor has acknowledged that the Fast Track Process for assessing asylum claims is unfair, it has not abolished Fast Track Assessments, and the 2023 platform no longer identifies the Fast Track process as being inadequate.

- Approximately 80 people refugees and people seeking asylum continue to be held in PNG. Most have no secure resettlement option. Many are too seriously ill to participate in any resettlement application.
- While Labor says it believes that indefinite or otherwise arbitrary detention is not acceptable, the legislative framework supporting this remains.
- Despite many years of evidence that offshore detention cannot be provided safely, it remains Labor policy, and facilities on Nauru will be maintained at great cost to Australian taxpayers. The Labor Government is also continuing payments to the PNG Government to support refugees and people seeking asylum who are still trapped in PNG. Recent revelations in the media confirm long held concerns about corruption associated with the huge sums provided by our government to support offshore detention.
- The ALP has committed to increasing Australia's annual refugee intake, but has yet to lift the intake above the very low figure of 13,750 set by the previous Coalition government. Even that low quota has not been filled in recent years.

### **What needs to happen now**

By maintaining all pillars of the previous Coalition government's Operation Sovereign Borders, the Albanese Government simply cannot deliver refugee policy that is based in the values of compassion and fairness and in accordance with Australia's international obligations. The Labor Government continues to do great harm to thousands of people here in Australia as well as those still held offshore.

- Immediately allow the remaining refugees and asylum seekers in PNG who wish to do so to come to Australia to receive medical care and secure resettlement solutions.
- Stop punishing people seeking protection for their mode and date of arrival. Allow all asylum seekers in Australia to apply for permanent protection.
- Abolish the Fast Track Assessment Process and as a matter of urgency, establish new fair and transparent assessment processes for protection claims – the 2021 ALP Policy platform identified that Fast Track is flawed.
- Establish an independent body to review decisions, including those who failed under the Fast Track system.
- Ensure that all refugees and asylum seekers living in the Australian community have the right to work, to study, and have access to housing and income support and medical care. Restore SRSS support to all people awaiting determination of their refugee status, including those in an appeals process.
- Provide permanent protection for refugees and people seeking asylum (in Australia and PNG) who have no other safe resettlement options.
- Make provision for the 14,000 people trapped in Indonesia as a result of Australia's 2014 ban on resettling refugees who travelled to Indonesia enroute to Australia.
- Increase the annual intake in the Special Humanitarian Program to at least 30,000 per year, and ensure that the quota is filled each year – this was identified as an aspirational target in the 2021 ALP policy platform.
- End mandatory and indefinite detention.
- End offshore detention and processing.
- Commit to amending the Migration Act to reinsert specific references to meeting our obligations under the UN Refugee Convention - this was a policy commitment in 2021 ALP platform.

## Addresses for your letters:

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This month we are asking people to write to **ALP politicians**

### Canberra Postal Address for all Senators

PO Box 6100  
Senate,  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

### Canberra Postal Address for all MPs

PO Box 6022  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

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You may also like to write to:

#### 1. The Prime Minister

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP  
Prime Minister  
PO Box 6022, House of Representatives, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

You cannot email the PM. Use the following link to the PM's Contact Form.

<https://www.pm.gov.au/contact-your-pm>

#### 2. Clare O'Neil, Minister for Home Affairs

The Hon Clare O'Neil MP  
Minister for Home Affairs  
PO Box 6022, House of Representatives, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

Email: [Clare.Oneil.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Clare.Oneil.MP@aph.gov.au)

Or use the Contact Form:

[https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators\\_and\\_Members/Contact\\_Senator\\_or\\_Member?MPID=140590](https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Contact_Senator_or_Member?MPID=140590)

#### 3. Andrew Giles, Minister for Immigration

The Hon Andrew Giles MP  
Minister for Immigration  
PO Box 6022, House of Representatives, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

Email: [Andrew.Giles.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Andrew.Giles.MP@aph.gov.au)

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Find electorate postal and email addresses for your local Labor MP here:

[https://www.aph.gov.au/senators\\_and\\_members/members](https://www.aph.gov.au/senators_and_members/members)

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- Email addresses for all Senators are on the next page

## EMAIL ADDRESSES FOR ALL SENATORS - UPDATED JUNE 2023

NB - For your convenience - **LABOR PARTY SENATORS ARE LISTED IN RED**

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Email addresses for all **ACT** senators - ready to copy and paste into "TO" section of your email:

[senator.katy.gallagher@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.katy.gallagher@aph.gov.au); [Senator.David.Pocock@aph.gov.au](mailto:Senator.David.Pocock@aph.gov.au)

Email addresses for all **NSW** senators - ready to copy and paste into "TO" section of your email:

[senator.ayres@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.ayres@aph.gov.au); [senator.bragg@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.bragg@aph.gov.au); [senator.cadell@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.cadell@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.davey@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.davey@aph.gov.au); [senator.faruqi@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.faruqi@aph.gov.au); [senator.hughes@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.hughes@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.kovacic@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.kovacic@aph.gov.au); [senator.mcallister@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mcallister@aph.gov.au); [senator.oneill@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.oneill@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.payne@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.payne@aph.gov.au); ; [senator.sheldon@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.sheldon@aph.gov.au); [senator.shoebridge@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.shoebridge@aph.gov.au)

Email addresses for all **NT** senators - ready to copy and paste into "TO" section of your email:

[Senator.McCarthy@aph.gov.au](mailto:Senator.McCarthy@aph.gov.au); [senator.nampijinpaprice@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.nampijinpaprice@aph.gov.au)

Email addresses for all **Queensland** senators - ready to copy and paste into "TO" section of your email:

[senator.allman-payne@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.allman-payne@aph.gov.au); [senator.canavan@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.canavan@aph.gov.au); [senator.chisholm@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.chisholm@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.green@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.green@aph.gov.au); [senator.hanson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.hanson@aph.gov.au); [senator.mcdonald@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mcdonald@aph.gov.au);  
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[senator.scarr@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.scarr@aph.gov.au); [senator.waters@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.waters@aph.gov.au); [senator.watt@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.watt@aph.gov.au)

Email addresses for all **SA** senators - ready to copy and paste into "TO" section of your email:

[senator.antic@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.antic@aph.gov.au); [senator.birmingham@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.birmingham@aph.gov.au); [senator.farrell@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.farrell@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.fawcett@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.fawcett@aph.gov.au); [senator.grogan@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.grogan@aph.gov.au); [senator.hanson-young@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.hanson-young@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.liddle@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.liddle@aph.gov.au); [senator.mclachlan@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mclachlan@aph.gov.au); [senator.pocock@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.pocock@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.ruston@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.ruston@aph.gov.au); [senator.marielle.smith@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.marielle.smith@aph.gov.au); [senator.wong@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.wong@aph.gov.au)

Email addresses for all **Tasmania** senators - ready to copy and paste into "TO" section of your email:

[senator.askew@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.askew@aph.gov.au); [senator.bilyk@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.bilyk@aph.gov.au); [senator.carol.brown@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.carol.brown@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.chandler@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.chandler@aph.gov.au); [senator.colbeck@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.colbeck@aph.gov.au); [senator.duniam@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.duniam@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.lambie@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.lambie@aph.gov.au); [senator.mckim@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mckim@aph.gov.au); [senator.polley@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.polley@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.tyrrell@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.tyrrell@aph.gov.au); [senator.urquhart@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.urquhart@aph.gov.au); [senator.whish-wilson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.whish-wilson@aph.gov.au)

Email addresses for all **Victorian** senators - ready to copy and paste into "TO" section of your email:

[senator.babet@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.babet@aph.gov.au); [senator.ciccone@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.ciccone@aph.gov.au); [senator.henderson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.henderson@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.hume@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.hume@aph.gov.au); [senator.mckenzie@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mckenzie@aph.gov.au); [senator.paterson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.paterson@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.rice@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.rice@aph.gov.au); [senator.stewart@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.stewart@aph.gov.au); [senator.thorpe@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.thorpe@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.van@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.van@aph.gov.au); [senator.walsh@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.walsh@aph.gov.au); [senator.white@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.white@aph.gov.au)

Email addresses for all **WA** senators - ready to copy and paste into "TO" section of your email:

[senator.brockman@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.brockman@aph.gov.au); [senator.cash@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.cash@aph.gov.au); [senator.cox@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.cox@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.dodson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.dodson@aph.gov.au); [senator.lines@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.lines@aph.gov.au); [senator.matt.o'sullivan@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.matt.o'sullivan@aph.gov.au);  
[Senator.Payman@aph.gov.au](mailto:Senator.Payman@aph.gov.au); [senator.pratt@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.pratt@aph.gov.au); [senator.reynolds@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.reynolds@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.smith@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.smith@aph.gov.au); [senator.steele-john@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.steele-john@aph.gov.au); [senator.sterle@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.sterle@aph.gov.au)

Email addresses for all MPs and Senators -

[https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators\\_and\\_Members/Guidelines\\_for\\_Contacting\\_Senators\\_and\\_Members](https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Guidelines_for_Contacting_Senators_and_Members)

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**NOTE:** If you are sending an email be sure to include your NAME and ADDRESS

The Subject line of your email could be -

CALL TO ACTION ... .. **Labor's Refugee Policies**

## Sample letter

Dear ..... *[Labor MP/Senator]*

I am writing as I am very concerned about the treatment of refugees and people who seek asylum in Australia. Like many others I was heartened by the stated commitment in the 2021 Labor policy platform to deliver refugee policy that is based in the values of compassion and fairness and in accordance with Australia's international obligations. Since you have been in government, some things have changed for the better – the granting of permanent visas to the family from Biloela, the release of many people from long term detention, and the commitment to provide permanent protection visas to all those previously on TPVs and SHEVs.

However, I have concerns that there has been no movement on a number of important issues. I sincerely hope that you will add your voice to call for action on these issues at the ALP National Conference in August. As well as political commitment, there is clearly a need for cultural change with the Department of Home Affairs to remove the tolerance for harmful and unacceptable practices.

I urge Labor to commit to:

- allowing the remaining refugees and asylum seekers in PNG who wish to do so to come to Australia to receive medical care and secure resettlement solutions
- abolish the Fast Track Assessment Process and as a matter of urgency establish new fair and transparent assessment processes for protection claims, so the 10,000 people who have been in limbo for 10 years can have their claims for protection properly addressed.
- establish an independent body to review decisions, including the cases of those who have not been granted protection under the Fast Track system.
- ensure that all refugees and asylum seekers living in the Australian community have the right to work, to study, and have access to housing and income support and Medicare. Restore SRSS support to all people awaiting determination of their refugee status, including those in appeal processes.
- provide permanent protection for refugees and people seeking asylum (in Australia and PNG) who have no other safe resettlement options.
- work with the UNHCR to find resettlement options for the 14,000 people trapped in Indonesia as a result of Australia's 2014 ban on resettling refugees who travelled to Indonesia enroute to Australia.
- increase the annual intake in the Special Humanitarian Program to at least 30,000 per year, and ensure that the quota is filled each year.
- end mandatory and indefinite detention and offshore processing.
- commit to amending the Migration Act to reinsert specific references to meeting our obligations under the UN Refugee Convention.

Please discuss these issues with your Labor colleagues and take a stand for justices and fair, compassionate treatment of refugees and people who are seeking protection in Australia.

Yours sincerely