

Submission:

Dated: Friday 12th October 2012

To whom it may Concern:

RE: Strengthening Economic Relations between Australia and New Zealand

I would like to make a submission and recommendations on the issue paper and study of the Trans Tasman Travel Agreement affecting New Zealand citizens who reside in Australia. I would like to make reference of my story to the following policies and discussions

The proposed initiatives and policy areas needing more investigations

**As per CER policy ‘Forth Freedom – People Movements
DR 4:17- A proposed initiative to the people contemplating a move to
Australia, DR 4:18 - Pathways to Permanent Resident/Citizenship
Table 3, 4:6 Australia Social Security Access limitation creating
hardship**

**The following is the outlined of my story and implications of the current
TTTA.**

My Story:

My husband and I decided to move our family to Australia in September 2001 for a better future. We had no prior knowledge of any changes to the TTTA requirements that took effect on 26th February 2001, we had 3 boys then who attended our local Primary State School from Grade 1-3, our daughter was born in Australia in August 2003, it was a shock to us when we went to apply for her passport to visit our families in New Zealand that we were told she would NOT qualify for an Australian passport because we (her parents) were not Australian Permanent Residents or Citizens, so that was ok, we were told we will have to wait until we have lived here for 2 years before we can apply for Permanent Residence, after two years we approach Immigration again to apply for our PR, we were bluntly told, NO, you don't qualify to apply because at the time my husband was already over 45 years old and his job was not listed on the SOL requirements, and I can't apply either because I was a stay at home mum then, we made several visits to Centrelink only to be told some more conflicting and confusing information, most phone calls to immigration for help was to be told to referred to the internet and read the complicated booklets available.

We have seek helped from Immigration Agents only to be told “DON’T BOTHER” applying because we will be DECLINE as we have no grounds to apply under any of the Permanent Visa’s available for NZ citizens.

Visa’s Classes available: Skilled Migration, Employer Sponsor, Family Sponsor and Remote Visa (we do not qualify for any of the above), there is NO ‘main stream’ visa available for everyone else that don’t fit the above category)

We have been told several times by Immigration that there is nothing we can do NOR any other pathways for us to gain Permanent Resident in Australia or to become Citizens, the only person in my family that will have a chance is my daughter (born in Australia) when she turns 10 years old, I have written to the Prime Minister and our local Federal Member only to be told the same thing, and as recently as last month we decided to have one more go at the Immigration to see if any policy has change to allow us to apply, the same answer was NO.

We are fighting this because we have lived here for over 10 years now and Australia is denying us of our right to have some form of belonging here, there are no other means or pathways for us to gain Permanent Residency in Australia, even though we have worked very hard and will continue to do so, we bought homes here and have paid our taxes, raised some very intelligent and responsible children. Our older son completed Y12 last year and scored very well in his OP, his dream was to attend University to further his study, but because we are not Permanent Residence or Citizens of Australia, he is denied access to HEC’S or New start Allowance, as parents we could NOT let him and his dream down, so we continue to struggle and work very hard to pay for his university studies, which means one of us has to take on a second job, we have 3 other children to put through University yet, at the moment if one of us is sick, we do not qualify for any parenting or sickness allowance from Centrelink, so we pay a high price of life insurance and income protection insurance.

We have joined many rallies and forums with many NZ citizens, who are also affected by the visa changes, we still can’t comprehend that we both work full time jobs (I also have a second job at night) to help pay for my son’s university fees, my husband works 10-12 hour days for us to survive, we have done very well in Australia and are grateful for that, but we still feel that we don’t really belong here, and because of our resident status we are also denied the right to vote in the electoral roll.

Our jobs according to Australia Immigration laws (SOL) do not meet the criteria to apply for under the 'skilled migration', my husband is a truck driver and I am a Cultural Teacher Aide for our local Primary School, and a part time 'Data Processing Operator' for a bank at night, I am also a dedicated volunteer and President of the schools Parents Association, I feel that our contribution to the Australia Economy is very UNDER VALUED, and I fear what future my 4 children will have in Australia if we continue to fight this battle.

All we ask is to make amendments to:

- **Current TTTA agreement to allow any NZ citizens who arrive in Australia after 26 February 2001, who meets character and health checks, who is employed (regardless of skills) be able to apply for Permanent Resident then citizenship, at the moment there is no MAIN STREAM VISA available for the majority of us who do not meet the current Visa's classes available for NZ citizens.**
- **Children of NZ citizens (Protected and Non Protected Special Category Visas, should have full access to HEC's and other Social Securities such as 'Newstart allowance' to further their studies into University and other Training Institutes**
- **NZ citizens should also be considered for all Government Employment Opportunities and may have the right to vote**
- **NZ citizens (regardless of visa status) should have access to some parenting and sickness allowance**

It really bothers me to see many boats crossing Australian shores, the government continues to house/pay/educate the asylums seekers and yet their own neighboring country are struggling to meet residents status in Australia, yet we work and pay our way, so Please we seek your help and considerations for your fellow kiwis

Sincerely

Rixon and Lima Berking