

**The Committees,
Parliament of Victoria
Spring Street,
East Melbourne, VIC 3002**

June 6th, 2020

Dear Parliamentary Committee,

**RE: COVID-19, Temporary Skilled Work Visa Holders (*Subclass 457, 482, 485, 489*)
stranded outside Australia**

I am writing on behalf of 63 other temporary skilled work visa holders residing in Victoria (list attached) who are currently left stranded outside Australia due to the COVID-19 situation.

It has been 80 days since the announcement of Australia border restriction on March 20th, and a majority of us are still left outside Australia without a permission to enter the country.

The struggles that we all are facing are indescribable.

- Most of us are separated from our family and loved ones – our husband and wife, our children, our parents, our pets, etc. It is the most excruciating part we are coping with every day.
- Some of us are homeless with no family or friends to rely on in the foreign countries. The extra costs of temporary accommodation and living outside our own home have been accumulated each day. Some are also paying for the rent of an empty accommodation in Victoria that we are not living in and can't go back to.
- Some are coping with challenging time differences to deliver work responsibilities within Australian operating hours in order to ensure our contributions at work and to secure our employment.
- And for all of us, our lives have been in Australia before the COVID-19.

Although the Immigration Office has announced an exemption to travel ban on compelling and compassionate grounds, **there is no clarity of the approval criteria that defines 'compelling' or 'compassionate'**. A lot of us have tried multiple times to apply for the exemption, with supporting documents for our circumstances, including letters from employers, medical certification, etc. Yet the rejection simply stated that we do not meet the criteria. No further explanations were provided.

All of us have been following the news with faith in humanity offered by the Australian Government. Earlier in May, the Government allowed rugby players to enter the country. International students were recently mentioned by the Prime Minister on a possibility to return in July. However, until now, there has been no acknowledgement from the authorities for the group of temporary skilled work visa holders who have been contributing to Australian economy and paying taxes for Victoria and the country.

I am writing to the Parliamentary Committee to seek compassion and support in allowing us to come home. We are more than willing to comply with the requirements by the Parliament of Victoria State and the Australian Government to ensure the health and safety of other Australian citizens and residents. All we are asking is your strong support as the parliamentary authority from Victoria to support us in returning to our loved ones and to our life in Australia.

Your consideration towards our inquiry is highly appreciated.

Regards,



Rungkarn Ratanaporn

On behalf of 63 other temporary skilled work visa holders residing in Victoria

#letuscomehome

Attachment: List of temporary skilled work visa holders residing in Victoria

**List of Skilled Work Visa Holders residing in Victoria and are currently left stranded
outside Australia:**



