

Citizenship fee change unfair

A Government decision to scrap concessions on the application fee for Australian citizenship should be reversed, the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) said today.

The call by FECCA follows a decision by the Minister for Home Affairs, Mr Peter Dutton, to amend a regulation governing the fee. As a result, migrants who hold health care cards or pensioner cards will have to pay the full citizenship application fee of \$285 instead of the current concessional fee of \$20 or \$40.

The Chairperson of FECCA, Mary Patetsos, said that the fee hike was unnecessary and unfair.

"This is a needless imposition. Pensioners and health care card holders are able to access concessional charges on a whole range of goods and services across Australia," Ms Patetsos said.

"Migrants and their families contribute hugely to the economic and cultural growth of this country. We don't understand why these people are being singled out and hit with extra costs simply because they aspire to become Australian citizens."

Ms Patetsos said that the Minister should rethink the proposal.

"If not, FECCA calls on the Senate to disallow the regulation," she said.

FECCA is the national peak body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. Our role is to advocate and promote issues on behalf of our constituency to government, business and the broader community.

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