

# FECCA opposes new citizenship bill

FECCA has made a submission to the Senate Inquiry examining the Australian Citizenship Legislation Amendment (Strengthening the Requirements for Australian Citizenship and Other Measures) Bill 2017 which strongly opposes the introduction of the Bill.

This legislation will dramatically change the rules determining qualification for Australian citizenship, extending the waiting period before permanent residents can apply for citizenship and raising the English language requirement to university-level.

Ms Eugenia Grammatikakis, Acting Chair of FECCA said: “This Bill will create a permanent underclass of Australian residents who will be denied the rights and opportunities of being welcomed and included as Australian citizens.”

She continued: “Australian citizenship fosters inclusivity, allowing migrants to feel Australian, regardless of their country of origin.”

“Permanent residents should be encouraged to seek citizenship as soon as practically possible to foster a sense of inclusion and belonging and to encourage integration,” said Ms Grammatikakis.

The new citizenship legislation will also allow a dramatic extension of ministerial discretionary powers to overrule immigration decisions by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection and the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

“The politicisation of immigration decision-making in individual cases threatens our immigration system, which has an international and long-standing reputation for being impartial, fair and transparent,” said Ms Grammatikakis.

FECCA's submission to the Senate Inquiry can be found [here](#).

FECCA is the peak national body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. FECCA's role is to advocate and promote issues on behalf of its constituency to government, business and the broader community.

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