



## OZ KIWI MEDIA RELEASE

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### **New Zealanders take concerns to Federal Parliament**

A not for profit group advocating for New Zealanders living in Australia will head to Canberra next week for a series of meetings with politicians across the spectrum. Oz Kiwi is calling for the Federal Government to accord the same rights to Kiwis living in Australia as other permanent residents.

#### **ISSUES FOR NEW ZEALANDERS RESIDENT IN AUSTRALIA**

Kiwis arriving in Australia enter on a Special Category Visa (SCV) which entitles them to live and work in Australia indefinitely, but the SCV does not provide an avenue for citizenship or access to many government services, even though they pay the same taxes as everyone else.

Some of the services New Zealanders are excluded from include access to the National Disability Insurance Scheme - for which they must pay a levy for as part of their taxes - student loans, unemployment benefit, disability benefits, and some insurances. New Zealanders are even barred from applying for jobs in the Australian Defence Force.

Australians who move to New Zealand are treated more fairly. They're able to vote after one year, receive social security benefits in times of hardship and sickness after two years, can access student loans after three years, and apply for citizenship after five years.

While there has been some progress made with regard to HELP loans – certain young New Zealanders raised in Australia, having arrived as dependent minors are eligible – and a potential new pathway to permanent residence was announced in February 2016, many of the issues remain unresolved. It is estimated only half of the Kiwis who arrived after 26<sup>th</sup> February 2001 will be eligible for this new visa.

Oz Kiwi Chair Tim Gassin said, "We're committed to working with politicians from both nations to find a reasonable solution. It is only through working together that we can expect to see a return to equitable treatment of trans-Tasman migrants."

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