

**Government Response to  
the petition of Malkiat Singh**

**Presented to the House of Representatives**

**In accordance with Standing Order 380**

## Government response to the petition of Malkiat Singh

### Introduction

- 1 The Government welcomes the Petition Committee's referral of this petition.
- 2 The Government has carefully considered the petition of Malkiat Singh (a licensed immigration adviser): *Remove the ballot system and limits from the Parent Residency Visa.*
- 3 The Government is responding to the petition in accordance with Standing Order 380.

### Request from petitioner

- 4 The petition which has received 144 signatures requests that:  
  
*"the House of Representatives urge the Government to remove the ballot system and the limit of 500 approvals per year from EOIs received after October 2022 for the Parent Resident visa to allow the family reunification of overseas-born New Zealanders and residence visa holders with their parents."*
- 5 The petitioner's reason is stated as:  
  
*"I believe the Parent Resident visa category is cruel and makes people rely on luck instead of motivating them to focus on eligibility, hard-work, and entrepreneurship, which would ultimately lead to progress for all New Zealanders. In May 2024, the Immigration New Zealand website shows a total of 9,616 EOIs in the post-October 2022 ballot system. With the current limit of 500 per year for these EOIs, it could take years to be selected. I believe this is ridiculous."*

### Government response

- 6 The petitioner's concerns relate to the ballot system for the Parent Category and specifically, on the previous limit of 500 places per annum (of the 2,500 per annum cap) for selections from the ballot.

#### *Current settings for accessing the Parent Category*

- 7 The Parent Category enables New Zealand citizens and residents to sponsor their parents for residence in New Zealand. This supports skilled migration by making New Zealand a more attractive place for skilled migrants to settle with their families.
- 8 As a residence class visa, the Parent Category offers significant benefits to those eligible, including the security and certainty of being able to stay in New Zealand indefinitely, the right to purchase residential property, and access to publicly funded healthcare.

- 9 While the Parent Category offers significant benefits, the settings have been designed to mitigate likely impacts it will have on New Zealand's health and social services, and associated fiscal costs. This is largely done through sponsorship requirements and an annual cap on individual visas, currently set at 2,500 per year. There is significant demand for the Parent Category above the 2,500 cap.
- 10 Prior to the reopening of the Parent Category in October 2022, Expressions of Interest (EOI) for the category were considered in chronological order. When the category was re-opened, a ballot system was introduced meaning any new EOIs would be entered into a ballot which is randomly drawn on a quarterly basis.
- 11 To honour those applicants in the existing queue, on the reopening of the Parent Category, 2,000 places per year were allocated to the pre-October 2022 queued pool - to be assessed in order of submission - and 500 places per year were allocated to new EOIs in the ballot.
- 12 EOIs in the Parent Category's pre-October 2022 queue have been all but cleared. EOIs will be drawn principally from the ballot going forward, meaning there will be up to 2,500 places from the ballot each year from now as opposed to only 500.

#### *Concerns raised about the ballot system*

- 13 While current settings allow for more than 500 selections from the ballot each year, there are broader concerns about the unfairness of a ballot system which have been raised by the petitioner and others. Significant feedback has been received about the lack of certainty and clarity of a ballot system as opposed to a chronological queue.
- 14 Officials have been directed to commence a review of the Category's allocation system as a matter of priority, starting as soon as possible this year.

#### **Conclusion**

- 15 The Government acknowledges the concerns raised by the petitioner as they pertain to the Parent Category ballot.
- 16 While current settings allow for up to 2,500 places per annum to be drawn for the ballot, we acknowledge the broader concerns about the unfairness of the ballot system. The Government has directed officials to commence a review of the Category's allocation system as a matter of priority, starting as soon as possible this year.
- 17 The Government is committed to supporting migrants and their families. We have recently announced the Parent Boost visa, a five-year renewable visitor visa to facilitate family reunification. This visa provides a pathway for New Zealand citizens and residents to have their parents join them in New Zealand, including while awaiting a place under the Parent Category.