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CITIZENSHIP RESUMPTION ANOMALIES

I welcome the announcement by the Government that it will resolve the position of one group of children whose parents lost Australian citizenship when section 17 of the Citizenship Act was still in place.

Since April 2002 Australians taking on another nationality are no longer stripped of their Australian citizenship. This change in the law was not retrospective.

Clearly, it was unfortunate that the Government did not simultaneously act to help those who had earlier lost their citizenship because of this provision.

The Government was well aware that several categories of children had been seriously disadvantaged when their parents lost Australian citizenship. Yesterday's announcement by Minister Hardgrave does not rectify the position for many of these families.

Crucially, the Coalition is offering nothing new to those adults who lost citizenship prior to April last year. This is by far the bigger group and their situation has been on the agenda for some time.

It is high time that the Government agreed to sit down with the groups concerned to discuss ways of improving the current citizenship resumption arrangements.

Surely the Minister for Citizenship is not so busy that he can't find time to fix glaring anomalies in our citizenship system.

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