

From: "Ferguson, Laurie (MP)" <Laurie.Ferguson.MP@aph.gov.au>
To: Eric Brown
Subject: Citizenship legislation
Date: 15 July 2004 02:25

Dear Mr Brown

I refer to your message to the ALP National Secretariat on 12 July 2004 about proposed changes to the Citizenship Act. I am replying as Shadow Minister for Population, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs.

As you note, the Opposition has long advocated measures to make it easier for people who lost citizenship on acquiring another nationality to resume Australian citizenship. We announced our position on this matter in our citizenship policy statement, released on Australia Day 2003.

Minister Hardgrave initially argued that the existing resumption arrangements were satisfactory. I am pleased that the Government has now reconsidered its approach to the matter.

The Government's announcement last week touches on a considerable number of citizenship issues. We have yet to see the text of the proposed changes to the legislation. The Opposition will need to analyse them before finalising our position on all the announced measures. We are, however, supportive of changes that would assist those who lost their citizenship because of the past operation of section 17, which was repealed in 2002 with our strong support.

I thank you for contacting the Opposition about your concerns.

Laurie Ferguson MP
Shadow Minister for Population, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs