



Dr Monique Ryan's statement in response to the LNP immigration policy announcement.

More than 60% of Kooyong's population are migrants or the children of migrants. Our post-war immigration program has been an outstanding success on any measure, whether it be social cohesion, economic productivity, or national identity.

That success is now under threat—not from immigration itself but from politicians seeking to exploit legitimate community anxieties about housing, infrastructure, and services, for short-term electoral gain.

Yesterday, Angus Taylor announced an immigration policy which borrows wholesale from Pauline Hanson and Donald Trump. It is thin on substance and large on threat. It risks serious, lasting damage to the social fabric of a country that we all love.

Taylor's centrepiece proposal—making the Australian Values Statement a legally enforceable visa condition, with deportation as the sanction for breach—is constitutionally dubious and practically unworkable. We already have a strong and enforced character test, and we have ongoing discussions in this country about the right to freedom of speech.

Australian values matter too much to be deployed as a threat to the overseas-born, enforced by a surveillance apparatus that has never been costed, under definitions so vague they could mean anything.

Taylor's proposed 'safe countries' list—a cut and paste from the Trump administration — ignores the fact that people who have experienced persecution and the denial of democratic rights are often those most committed to protecting those rights in their new countries. I hear that from constituents when I talk to them—at citizenship ceremonies, at the supermarket, at schools and sporting activities.

Taylor's social media monitoring proposal and plan to resurrect the temporary protection visa system would create red tape and cost.

Our country has real and significant challenges. Our permanent migration target of 185,000 per year is a tiny fraction of the numbers which enter and leave Australia each year. Over the last decade our population of temporary migrants has increased by 1 million. After COVID, there was a significant overshoot due to Morrison-era policy settings such as unlimited work rights for international students. The Albanese government responded too slowly and is still catching up.

We need coherent, transparent immigration policy from our government. That should include setting net migration targets sufficient to meet labour force needs and manage demographic ageing, while giving housing construction and infrastructure time to catch up. It should include transparent and enforceable policymaking around international students, temporary skilled visas and working holiday makers. It should provide more clarity around the processing of applications from asylum seekers and reintroduce service standards for visa processing.

The government should restore a freestanding Department of Immigration and Citizenship with responsibility for all facets of immigration policy, and an independent national migration thinktank providing an evidence base for public debate. And it should publish a long-term migration plan—as recommended by the Parkinson Review—explaining its rationale for migration targets to the Australian public.

Australia deserves an honest, transparent, evidence-based, long-term immigration framework—one that addresses our real structural problems without scapegoating migrants, undermining our international reputation, or treating whole communities as suspect on the basis of their origin.

One in three Australians was born overseas. They're our neighbours, our colleagues, our friends. They deserve a policy debate conducted in good faith.

Australia's long-term demographic and economic interests require sustained, well-managed migration. The task of responsible government is to manage it honestly—not to weaponise it.