



Refugee Council
of Australia

19 September 2011

COMPLEMENTARY PROTECTION LEGISLATION PASSED

The Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) today welcomed the passage of legislation in the Australian Parliament to protect non-refugees at risk from persecution and torture.

The Migration Amendment (Complementary Protection) Bill 2011 improves protections for people who are not found to be refugees but are still at grave risk of persecution, torture or death on return to their country of origin.

RCOA CEO Paul Power said the legislation provided a clear and prompt legal process for people whom Australia has committed to protecting under human rights treaties such as the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention Against Torture.

“Previously, decisions on the fate of such vulnerable people lay solely with the Minister for Immigration, who could only consider the case after a lengthy process of applications, refusals and appeals was exhausted – even when the need to protect an individual from persecution was widely accepted,” Mr Power said.

“For the past 10 years, RCOA and its member organisations have campaigned for a better system to protect those people who are at great risk but do not fit the Refugee Convention’s formal definition of a refugee,” he said.

“RCOA acknowledges the efforts of Minister Chris Bowen and his predecessor Senator Chris Evans in drafting the legislation and seeing its passage through Parliament.”

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