



COVERSHEET

Minister	Hon Erica Stanford	Portfolio	Immigration
Title of Cabinet paper	Government Response to the petition of Raina Vermani: Prioritise applications for parent resident visas submitted in October 2022	Date to be published	7 April 2025

List of documents that have been proactively released		
Date	Title	Author
February 2025	Government Response to the petition of Raina Vermani: Prioritise applications for parent resident visas submitted in October 2022	Office of the Minister of Immigration
20 February 2025	LEG-25-MIN-0004 Minute	Cabinet Office

Information redacted

YES / NO *(please select)*

Any information redacted in this document is redacted in accordance with MBIE's policy on Proactive Release and is labelled with the reason for redaction. This may include information that would be redacted if this information was requested under Official Information Act 1982. Where this is the case, the reasons for withholding information are listed below. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Some information has been withheld for the reasons of privacy of natural persons.

In Confidence

Office of the Minister of Immigration
Cabinet Legislation Committee

Government Response to the petition of Raina Vermani: *Prioritise applications for parent resident visas submitted in October 2022*

Proposal


- 1 This paper seeks approval of the Government’s response to the petition of Raina Vermani: *Prioritise applications for parent resident visas submitted in October 2022*.

Background

- 2 On 15 November 2024, the Petitions Committee referred the Petition of Raina Vermani: *Prioritise applications for parent resident visas submitted in October 2022* to me, in my capacity as Minister of Immigration, for response in accordance with Standing Order 380.
- 3 The petition requests that: “*the House of Representatives urge the Government to select applications from the expressions of interest for the parent resident visa ballot whose ballots are expiring in October 2024*”.
- 4 The petitioner’s reason is stated as:

“*The ballots for individuals who submitted an expression of interest for the parent visa in October 2022 are approaching their expiration date. I believe it is important to prioritise these individuals in the May 2024 ballot to provide them with an opportunity to apply before their expressions of interest expire. These individuals have already paid a fee and, in my experience, have been waiting patiently for a long time*”.

Government response to the petition

- 5 The petitioner’s request was to prioritise selections from the Parent Category ballot to avoid Expressions of Interest (EOIs) expiring from October 2024. This cannot be actioned as EOIs in the ballot are randomly drawn and those EOIs submitted in October 2022 have now expired.
- 6 **Privacy of natural persons**

- 7 In this context, I propose that the Government response comment on the concerns raised about the Parent Category settings in general, rather than addressing specific time periods or individual EOIs.

8 I am seeking Cabinet approval for the proposed response, as attached at Annex One. The proposed response outlines that:

- 8.1 The Parent Category supports skilled migration by making New Zealand a more attractive place for skilled migrants to settle with their families. It also offers significant benefit to those eligible.¹
- 8.2 As parents are often older and less likely to be in the labour force, the Parent Category settings need to mitigate the potential impact on New Zealand's health and social services. This is done notably through a cap on annual places, which is currently 2,500.
- 8.3 When the category re-opened in October 2022, a new ballot system was introduced (in addition to clearing the existing queue)². The ballot system sees EOIs drawn at random on a quarterly basis. Given the significant demand³, this prevents long queues and backlogs from forming and it provides a greater chance of earlier access to the Parent Category than entering at the back of the queue would have.
- 8.4 If not selected, the EOIs in the ballot expire after two years⁴. This expiry ensures that the information provided is up to date and accurate about current interest and eligibility for the visa.
- 8.5 Those who have an EOI expire are able to resubmit a new EOI, however this comes with an associated fee⁵. The current EOI fee is \$450 for online applications and \$575 for physical applications. The response commits that MBIE officials will consider whether the fee is at an appropriate level (i.e. in line with cost recovery principles) as part of a future immigration fee and levy review.

9 The response does not propose any changes to the current Parent Category settings.

Timing of the government response

10 The government response must be presented to the House by 4 March 2025.

Financial Implications

11 The proposed response to the petition has no financial implications.

¹ Residence is a valuable visa class, as it provides many added benefits for migrants, including security and certainty of being able to stay in New Zealand indefinitely, the ability to purchase property, get publicly funded healthcare, and access to social welfare after two years of residence.

² While the pre-October 2022 queue is cleared, new EOIs in the ballot (i.e. those submitted post October 2022) only make up a portion of the overall cap, when the pre-October 2022 queue is cleared the entire 2,500 places will be filled via the ballot.

³ There continues to be strong demand for the category, with over 10,000 Expressions of Interest between October 2022 and November 2024 representing nearly 16,000 people, in the ballot.

⁴ As at 27 January 2025, 664 EOIs had expired, 207 of which have made new EOIs subsequently.

⁵ As the cost is for Immigration New Zealand to process the EOI, it is not refunded if the EOI is not selected.

Proactive Release

- 12 This paper will be proactively released (subject to redactions in line with the Official Information Act 1982) within 30 business days of decisions being confirmed by Cabinet.

Recommendations

The Minister of Immigration recommends that the Cabinet Legislation Committee:

- 1 note that, on 15 November 2024, the Petitions Committee referred the Petition of Raina Vermani: *Prioritise applications for parent resident visas submitted in October 2022* to the Minister of Immigration for response;
- 2 note that the petition asks “that the House of Representatives urge the Government to select applications from the expressions of interest for the parent resident visa ballot whose ballots are expiring in October 2024”;
- 3 note that the petitioner’s request cannot be actioned, as Expressions of Interest (EOIs) in the ballot are randomly drawn and those EOIs submitted in October 2022 have now expired;
- 4 note that the proposed government response acknowledges the concerns raised by the petitioner as they pertain to the Parent Category settings more generally and provides the rationale for the settings;
- 5 approve the government response, attached at Annex One, to the Petition of Raina Vermani;
- 6 note that the government response must be presented to the House by 4 March 2025;
- 7 note that, once approved, the Government response can be presented to the House on the next available sitting day;
- 8 invite the Minister of Immigration to present the Government response to the House in accordance with Standing Order 380;
- 9 invite the Minister of Immigration to write to the petitioner enclosing a copy of the Government response to the petition, after the response has been presented to the House.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Erica Stanford

Minister of Immigration