

8 GRANT VISA EXTENSIONS TO THE HONG-KONG INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS WHO BECAME POLITICAL REFUGEES - Councillor Dr Peter Kim

File Number: CLM/20/1/1/6 - BP20/593

BACKGROUND:

The motion is a humanitarian call for action.

Hong Kong ex-pats living and studying in Australia are "deeply concerned" about their future. For them, Hong Kong is now a *different place* to when they have left their homeland. They fear going back to Hong Kong. They fear that they will be going back to a country with a communist regime which is *incompatible* with their right to the enjoyment of democratic way of life.

When they arrived in Australia, Hong Kong was a country that shared common values, including respect for the rule of law, human rights and individual freedoms. However, on May 28, 2020, China's Parliament, National People's Congress, has overwhelmingly voted to approve a new law imposing national security legislation on Hong Kong to tackle what Beijing has labelled "secession, subversion, terrorism and foreign interference in the semi-autonomous city".

Hong Kong has one of the largest Australian communities abroad with around 100,000 Australians living in Hong Kong. Approximately 96,000 people from Hong Kong live in Australia. The Census of Population and Housing 2016 recorded that Ryde is a suburb of one of the highest population of Hong Kong born citizens. According to the Australian Parliament House research paper in 2019 - Overseas students in Australian higher education - there were 2,721 Hong Kong International students in NSW and 8,931 in Australia. Many of these students live in Ryde LGA and study in Macquarie University. They have suddenly become political refugees.

On behalf of our Hong Kong Ryde citizens, I seek the Ryde Council to declare that Ryde Council support the Hong Kong Ryde Citizens' desire to live a democratic way of life.

MOTION:

- (a) That Council declare that "Ryde Council support the Hong Kong ex-pats in Ryde and Australia in pursuing a democratic way of life". All supporting Councillors to sign the declaration and initiate a media campaign through the usual medial channels.
- (b) That Council write to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Immigration, and their Federal oppositions to consider offering a four-year extension of visas to those Hong Kong International Students and ex-pats already in Australia.

NOTICE OF MOTION 8 (continued)

- (c) That the General Manager reports all correspondences on this subject in the Council meeting agenda under the Precis of Correspondence.