



2019 Federal election
**Campaign
Newsletter
Number
FOUR**

Hello Grandmothers and Friends of Grandmothers,

Two weeks into the election campaign, there has been a ramping up of activity to ensure the future for refugee children and their families is clearly on the agenda for all hopeful politicians. We have framed our key messages to be simple and clear:

Grandmothers make Four Demands of the 46th Parliament

- 1. End all forms of detention for refugee children**
- 2. End refugee family separation**
- 3. Get all refugees off Manus and Nauru to safe settlement**
- 4. Ensure refugee children and their families seeking asylum are held no longer than 72 hours to enable basic identity and health checks**

Breaking news! [Half page press ad to launch of the Grandmothers 2019 Election Campaign](#)

Refugee children are still not safe.



They are off Nauru at last, but they are not safe! Our trusted advice is: **5 children** remain in locked detention facing deportation; **287 children** are in community detention; and **2453 refugee children** are in community on short-term bridging visas. These innocent children and their families are still being used for crass political purposes. Their suffering has gone on for far too long. Enough is enough.

The Grandmothers Against Detention of Refugee Children call on all candidates for election to the next Parliament to make a stand for a humane refugee policy and prove themselves worthy of leadership.

We make Four Demands of the 46th Parliament

- 1** End all forms of detention for refugee children.
- 2** End refugee family separation.
- 3** Get all refugees off Manus and Nauru to safe settlement.
- 4** Ensure refugee children and their families seeking asylum are held no longer than 72 hours to enable basic identity and health checks.

**End Australia's shame.
✓ On May 18, vote for a humane refugee policy.**

Find out more: www.grandmothersadro.org

Authorised by Juan Kar Walsh, PO Box 1270, 146 Elgin Street, Carlton

In this weekend's edition of The Saturday Paper, we launch our campaign on behalf of refugee children with a half page advertisement stating our **Four Demands of the 46th Parliament**. You can preview the ad here. Much better still....please ask for it at your newsagent and buy a copy of *The Saturday Paper* this weekend 27 April edition. The publisher, Schwartz Media, has given us this space at no charge. We think their *pro bono* support for our efforts and for refugees is deserving of our support in return. You can subscribe to The Saturday Paper at www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/subscribe.

A special thanks, too, to Julie Cattlin who designed this ad for us. Julie regularly puts her professional skills to work for the Grandmothers by designing and managing the printing of our flyers. Speaking of which....

Campaign flyers are available

We have had printed thousands of campaign flyers outlining the case for the **Four Demands of the 46th Parliament**. If your electorate group has not picked up a supply for distribution in your area, please contact us at grandmothersref@gmail.com. You can letterbox, handout at the local railway station, ask cafes to display them, handout flyers at a street vigil. You can also download to print the flyer from the attachment or from our website www.grandmothersadrc.org.



Wills electorate Grandmothers make an early start to get the message to commuters.

Our strategy targets key electorates

We know that all of you are working especially hard right now to get our Four Demands of the 46th Parliament before candidates and the voting public. Our sense

is that the environment is really changing and that a positive emphasis on humanitarian concerns is starting to have an impact.

We encourage you to keep handing out leaflets (***see latest leaflet attached***) in busy places such as railway stations, markets and shopping centres and to have conversations with people as much as you are able. Anecdotal evidence suggests that these conversations are very powerful, and really can encourage people to rethink or refocus their views. And keep those candidates on their toes!!

We refer later to a 'meet the candidates' forum in which our Jaga Jaga group participated and we know that groups such as Bendigo, Kooyong, Flinders and Cooper, amongst others, have been talking to individual politicians. We have actually been considering a questionnaire based on our Four Demands which could be sent to individual candidates and then tabulated in a scorecard for distribution, but our advice is that the major parties will not formally commit to views beyond those in their platforms, and that face to face questioning and conversation is far more effective.

We have also been thinking about how we can use our limited resources in the most effective way. We have developed a list of key or marginal electorates where a concerted effort is likely to have the greatest impact. The key electorates we have identified in Victoria are Corangamite, Dunkley, Chisholm, Deakin, Higgins, Hotham, McNamara, Menzies, Kooyong, Goldstein, Casey, Fraser and Flinders.

Our thinking is that, where there is no local group or the local group would appreciate some assistance, we would try to facilitate that centrally. Coordinators from Flinders, Menzies and Casey who were able to attend a meeting with the Planning Group this week said that they would welcome some extra purple power and those from Wills, Maribyrnong, Cooper and Melbourne have indicated that their groups may be able to offer assistance. The seats we have identified are important seats where the messages of our movement will potentially be heard at this time by the compassionate voter.

If you belong to any of the key electorates we have identified, can you get in contact with your coordinator and let her know that you are able to lend a hand? If you are not a member of a group, or if your group is one of those key electorates and would appreciate further help, or if you are able to offer help from outside these electorates, we urge you to contact grandmothersref@gmail.com as soon as possible.

Let's keep up our collaborative efforts over the next three weeks and especially keep up those conversations, remembering that if you are having them in the environs of a polling booth (early voting starts next Monday, 29 April) you are legally required to be more than six metres from the entrance to the polling booth. We can't have Grandmothers being arrested!! – Margaret Browne on behalf of the Campaign Working Group

A Joint Meeting of Executive, Planning Committee and Electorate Coordinators was held on Wednesday 24th April to share news from electorates and finalise campaign activities.

Bendigo Grandmothers featured in the Annual Easter Sunday Parade and reported an uplift in the applause this year, suggesting the community's mood is shifting towards a more compassionate response to refugees.

Reviewing the Palm Sunday Rallies

Grandmothers in our signature purple colours were a strong presence at April 14 Palm Sunday marches for Justice for Refugees.



Richard Flanagan gave a robust and moving speech at the Melbourne Palm Sunday Rally. He spoke of the power of words used by Behrouz Boochani, detained refugee and award-winning author of *No Friend but the Mountains*, who also addressed the crowd of thousands in a recorded message from Manus Island. Richard encouraged all of us not to give up:

*This is not a time for pessimism, but optimism. After 20 years, Australia is once more beginning to move. We are not what we were in 2001. We have lived the shame, we have seen the cost in human lives, and we understand we are less free in consequence. It is time Australia once more walked tall in the company of other nations...
And I tell you today, we will win.*

You can read here an edited version of Richard Flanagan's address published by *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/apr/14/have-we-australia-become-a-country-that-breeds-mass-murderers-with-our-words>

A shared vision for the country we want to be:

Recently the **Jagajaga Grandmothers joined forces with eight other activist groups** in their electorate to organise an opportunity for Jagajaga electors to meet the candidates for the upcoming election at a public forum. Four topics were on the agenda. Those on the team working on 'Asylum Seekers and Refugees' wrote and presented the following vision statement addressed to the candidates and voters.

Our vision is an Australia which treats people seeking asylum with dignity and compassion.

As groups working with people seeking asylum in our country, we know they suffer indignity, uncertainty, hardship and fear.

We call on the next Government to end indefinite detention.

It must examine the need for and operation of all detention centres. The shameful history of our offshore detention policy must end. Those still suffering offshore should be brought to Australia for reception. Our current onshore detention systems must be reviewed, with attention to the inadequate prison-like conditions of detention centres and the punitive restrictions of “community detention”.

As innocent people who have been damaged in our care are progressively brought from offshore detention, they must be treated on the mainland urgently and with respect. Efficient, appropriate and speedy processing of applications for asylum and visas is necessary to provide the applicants with confidence and clarity of what to expect. Processing is better done in the community, but if people are detained on arrival, this should be limited to the time required for health and security checks.

Families should be kept together or positive steps made to reunite them if they become separated. While applications for visas are processed, applicants should be housed in the community with access to legal, financial, health and educational services and should be allowed to work.

We call on the next Government to recognize the harm done by leaving claimants in the limbo of TPV and SHEV visas, and to abolish these. They must also recognize the injustice of the “Fast Track” process and enable those rejected by it to appeal. The Refugee Review Tribunal must be reinstated.



The writers were Meg L'Estrange (Grandmothers Against the Detention of Refugee Children) pictured below, Lyn Richards (Montmorency Asylum Seekers Support Group) and Amber Johnston (#RightTrack Jagajaga Conversation Project).

NSW Grandmothers are making The Four Demands an issue for candidates in targeted Sydney and Newcastle electorates.

Gaby Judd reports that there is still much to be done. "We have vigils scheduled, flyers to give out, social media photo opportunities and much more."

- ❖ Every Thursday. Newcastle GADRC vigils, 5-6pm.
- ❖ #RightTrack Election canvassing: Wentworth, 27th April. Banks: 4th May.
- ❖ 27th April - Manly. You are Invited ...A FORUM ON REFUGEES.
- ❖ Tuesday 30th April. 12.30-1.30pm Sutherland GADRC vigil outside Craig Kelly's office.
- ❖ Tuesday 7th May QVB GADRC NSW vigil in the heart of Sydney.
- ❖ Thursday 9 May. 12.30 - 1.30 pm. BONDI JUNCTION Grandmothers lunchtime Vigil.
- ❖ Monday 13th May 12.30-1.30pm GADRC Vigil Manly

NSW GADRC are supporting the **I Choose Humane campaign** (go to <https://www.choosehumane.org.au/>) by posting pictures or tweets on May 14th 'Choose Humane Day' four days before polling day.

Voter Alert!

Making your vote count in the Senate means paying attention to the new rules intended to make it easier to select from the dozens of candidate names on the white Senate ballot paper. You need to either:

- number at least six boxes above the line for the parties or groups of your choice, or
- number at least 12 boxes below the line for individual candidates of your choice.

Whilst we grandmothers have been voting for a long time, our grandchildren who may be voting for the first time might benefit from a little coaching session to make sure their vote is a valid vote.

Above the line voting

If you vote above the line, you need to **number at least six boxes from 1 to 6**. Place a 1 in the box above the party or group that is your first choice, the number 2 in the box above the party or group that is your second choice and so on until you have numbered at least six boxes above the line. You can continue to place numbers in the order of your choice in as many boxes above the line as you like. Your preferences will first be distributed to the candidates in the party or group of your first choice, then to candidates in the party or group of your second choice and so on, until all your group preferences have been distributed.

Below the line voting

Place a 1 in the box for the candidate who is your first choice, the number 2 in the box for your second choice and so on until you have numbered at least 12 boxes below the line.

You can continue to select more than 12 if you wish.

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Voter coaching tip! Choose EITHER above the line OR below the line. Do not do both.

That's it for this edition. We hope you are feeling connected with the many activities geared to ensuring this crucial federal election delivers the change we need for refugee children and their families.

Until next time,
Best Wishes...

From your executive team *Jean, Margaret, Clare and Mary.*

Watch for the GADRC Campaign Newsletter arriving directly into your email inbox.