



MEDIA RELEASE

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AUSTRALIAN PROGRESSIVES ASHAMED AND DISGUSTED BY REPEAL OF MEDEVAC LEGISLATION

The Australian Progressives have slammed the repeal of the Medevac Bill this morning in Federal parliament, calling it an act of cowardice. Tasmanian Senator Jacque Lambie's vote was critical in ensuring the passage of the vote to repeal The Home Affairs Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous Measures) Bill 2018 – commonly referred to as the Medevac Bill.

Australian Progressives President, Robert Knight has called the repeal mean, heartless and an assault on the democratic process. "Senator Lambie has made a quid pro quo deal with the Morrison Government, and the Australian people have a right to know what the offer contains, for Ms Lambie to sell out the lives of illegally detained refugees," said Mr Knight. "Scott Morrison and Jacqie Lambie need to face the Australian people today and tell us what was the bag of silver and what it cost to assault the very fabric of our democracy," he continued

The Australian Progressives are disappointed the lives and wellbeing of legitimate refugees are again in the hands of Peter Dutton who has proven himself to be harsh and unfeeling when it comes to refugees and asylum seekers who are neither white or Christian. "This is a cruel and heartless act and will result in further deaths in detention. Prior to the introduction of the Medevac bill in march, more than a dozen people had died in detention. Since the introduction of the bill, there have been no further deaths in custody," Knight continued.

The Medevac Bill was alleged to have undermined the Government's border protection policy, but should never have been in place at all. "This government has shown time and again it does not care for legitimate refugees, unless they are white and Christian. The Medevac bill should not have been required initially, and was introduced because of the brutal offshore detention policy of the LNP governments under a succession of racist and anti Muslim Prime Ministers."

Many have come to detention with pre existing trauma and injuries from persecution. These physical and mental health issues are further compounded by the inhumane conditions in offshore detention. Many deteriorate due to a lack of appropriate and suitable physical and mental health care.

"Denying necessary access to health care for detainees is a callous and heartless way to score political points. The medical facilities on Manus Island and Nauru are grossly inadequate and the Government has made drastic cuts to the support services and monitoring previously in place. There will be further deaths in detention," said Mr Knight. "Every episode of self harm and suicide will rest squarely with Jacque Lambie and the Morrison Government. Ms Lambie's crocodile tears in the senate this morning were more of self pity than real concern for refugees!"

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About Australian Progressives:

We believe in the advancement of an empathetic society - one in which all citizens of Australia can reach their full potential and find fulfilment in their lives within a thriving democracy. We will be a government with the guts to advance society through laws, services and infrastructure, for the benefit of all people. We believe government and communities should work together to develop creative and passionate individuals who can improve the world around them, embracing education, technology, science, culture and global leadership.

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