



News - Letters
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12

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Rights of citizens

PHILLIP O'Carroll's belief "that public opinion decides when the time has come for a right to be defended in law" (Letters, 25/8) raises the question: whose public opinion?

Public opinion is diverse. Some may decide that Australia does not need a charter because they personally feel no need. Others, looking beyond their own needs, may believe that these rights should be enshrined to ensure that no one misses out.

Among this group, there is growing public support for a charter of human rights because of the evidence of recent events.

There is an Australian law that allows an innocent person, neither accused nor charged, to be deprived of their liberty for their life, without recourse to law. Another law allows non-citizen children in Australia to be imprisoned and denied access to the law to gain release, even when there is proof that this imprisonment is causing them irreparable harm. These laws breach human rights and cry out for change.

It is critical that human rights in Australia are enshrined in law and placed out of the reach of party politics and shock jock opinion makers. Human rights are for all human beings, not just for citizens.

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