



STATEMENT

THE HON RICHARD MARLES MP SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION MEMBER FOR CORIO

LABOR SECURES LEGISLATION TO FAST TRACK REMOVING CHILDREN FROM DETENTION

Labor today successfully passed amendments to the *Migration and Maritime Powers Amendment Bill 2015* in the Senate to ensure children and parents or guardians are removed from immigration detention within 30 days.

Children should only be in detention for as long as it takes to undertake health, identity and security checks.

It is also important that we keep family units together where ever possible.

That is why Labor moved to see the legislation amended to ensure that the Minister is not required to make a determination in cases where one or both of the parents or guardians have received an adverse security assessment from ASIO.

In such cases, the minor will be able to choose to stay with their parent or guardian in detention if they so choose.

Labor also believes that the Minister must be satisfied that the living conditions the minor is being moved to, must be demonstrably better than their current circumstances.

These important safeguards are important to ensure the best interests of the minor are always put first.

Legislation has also been amended to enshrine mandatory reporting of child abuse, including sexual abuse in Australian funded detention centres.

Labor also voted to improve journalist access to detention facilities - both in Australia and within the Regional Processing network.

Labor believes greater transparency is critical to all immigration facilities. It is critical the Australian community have confidence in the operation of these centres.

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