

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

30 November 2018



"It is time for politicians to re-think their stand on children, women and men in onshore and offshore detention" according to Rural Australians for Refugees National President, Marie Sellstrom.

"They need to forget their political differences and support the Asylum Seeker Medical Bill to be put before federal parliament next week. Until now it is only the crossbenchers' who are showing the leadership and commitment to justice that Australians expect".

The crossbenchers' Urgent Medical Treatment Bill, expected to go before parliament next week is the first real chance in years to transfer ill people off Nauru and Manus Island to Australia.

"Australians want a society which is just, tolerant and welcoming where innocent children are not held on isolated islands or Australian detention centres deprived of the joys of childhood. We want leaders who do not punish men, women and children for seeking our protection and failing to show a duty of care to people who are suffering physical and mental illness" Ms Sellstrom added.

RAR members have been holding vigils in rural towns and cities throughout Australia in support of the #Kids Off Nauru Campaign. Many medical professionals and faith groups support this call. Ms Sellstrom said that a number of RAR members visit people in detention centres at Villawood and Broadmeadows and are gravely concerned for their welfare.

"Twelve children and their families are still on Nauru we want them all off and also the men and women who require urgent medical attention."

Rural Australians for Refugees urge our federal politicians to demonstrate unity not division, compassion not cruelty, fairness not favouritism, wisdom not slogans, leadership not populism.

***Marie Sellstrom***

*Rural Australians for Refugees Australia*