



## RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

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PETITION No.: **421-01353**

BY: **MR. TABBARA (KITCHENER SOUTH-HESPELER)**

DATE: **MAY 16, 2017**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **THE HON. AHMED HUSSEN**

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Response by the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

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SUBJECT

**Immigration**

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**ORIGINAL TEXT**

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**REPLY**

Family reunification is a core immigration priority for the Government of Canada. It supports the integration of immigrants into Canada and contributes to Canada's social, cultural and economic development.

As part of the objective to support family reunification, Canadian citizens and permanent residents can sponsor their parents and grandparents for immigration to Canada. In order to continue to reduce the current backlog of applications and minimize the likelihood of future backlogs and lengthy processing times, the Parent and Grandparent Program is subject to a cap on the number of applications that will be accepted for processing each year. On February 26, 2016, the Government formally doubled the cap to 10,000 new and complete applications per year.

There are, however, more people interested in sponsoring their parents or grandparents for immigration to Canada than there are spaces available annually. To improve people's access to the application process for the Parent and Grandparent Program and ensure that the available spaces are allocated in the most fair and transparent manner possible, the Government introduced a random selection process, effective January 1, 2017. Before, sponsors had to rush to apply in January when the program re-opened, which led some applicants to pay higher courier fees in an attempt to secure their spot.

The Government of Canada welcomes feedback on its programs and services. The changes to the intake process for the Parent and Grandparent Program are about ensuring fairness by giving all interested sponsors equal access to the application process. The random selection process levels the playing field so that all interested Canadian citizens and permanent residents have an equal chance of being selected to have their application to sponsor their parents or grandparents accepted for processing as part of the 10,000 cap. Phasing in the change over several years would not have achieved the fairness outcome that the Department was seeking.

In order to consistently apply the principle of fairness, entries that were not selected in one year are not prioritized in future years. The Super Visa remains an option for those who would like to have their parents or grandparents visit with their family for an extended period of time.