

2021-03-08

Dear Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration ,

I write to appeal that you consider recommending the lifting of the Covid related travel restriction faced by intending immigrants to Canada with permanent residence applications approved after mid-day of March 18, 2020. The travel restriction has now been in place for almost a year.

Given current exemptions and new policy measures announced to slow the spread of Covid like mandatory three days quarantine in approved hotels, testing for Covid before departure and at arrival in Canada, the restriction on this class of intending immigrants has become unfair. Travelling to Canada to become a permanent resident is as a good as any example of non-discretionary travel.

The notion that people with applications approved after March 18 have no legitimate basis to complain because the travel restriction came into force before their applications were approved, is a view that does not quite appreciate the hurdles that applicants face and the reality of the planning and work required to leave one's country and immigrate to Canada. People begin to cut ties in their home country at different stages of the application as this is the only effective way to plan for relocation. No one waits to have the COPR in hand before initiating their exit plans.

The additional measures put in place to minimize the transmission of the virus from international travelers form a strong basis for the travel restriction on approved permanent residents to be lifted. The fact that certain groups are exempted from the travel restriction, such as those with family in Canada who are permanent residents or citizens, international students, and temporary workers indicates there is confidence that transmission of Covid can be managed.

Canada has rightly earned an international reputation for being a country that always seeks to do the right thing. Not lifting the restriction is to subject families, who have put their faith in the Canadian immigration system, to intolerable stress as they are forced to put their lives on hold.

Sincerely,

Dennis Meres.