

Maggie Barry  
Private Bag 18888  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington 6160  
NEW ZEALAND

23 June 2013

Dear Maggie Barry.

I am writing to you in your capacity as Member for North Shore.

In 2005, the Government passed amendments to the *Passport Act 1992*, which among other things reduced the validity of all New Zealand travel documents from 10 years to five years. At the time, the Government cited that this was necessary due to security concerns and passport integrity.

Since that time, however, New Zealand along with all other nations that are part of the US Visa Waiver programme, has introduced biometric passports – which are considered by the International Civil Aviation Organization to be the most secure travel document available. Further, we note that most OECD nations have 10-year passports, and that the majority of developing countries issue five-year passports. Aside from validity, the passport fee has increased from under \$80 prior to the change, to over \$150, this, we acknowledge has been reduced late last year in order to reduce the massive surplus in the Passports Memorandum Account, a surplus resulting from the issuance of five-year passports. The current application fee in New Zealand is \$140.00 for first time applicants and \$134.50 for an adult renewal (offline).

I would like to draw your attention to the considerable inconvenience of having to renew a passport every five years. Many New Zealanders, live abroad for family reasons, while others are on work contracts, or some volunteer at NGOs for long periods in developing nations that do not have the luxury of a postal or courier service, others reside in Europe. Wherever we are located abroad and for whatever reason, the Government in 2005 ensured that every 4.5 years we have to incur the additional expense and loss of time in order to transfer our visas or permits into a new NZ Passport, a measure that this Government is happy to perpetuate. It's is not surprising that that many born and bred New Zealanders that hold dual citizenship, have ceased renewing their New Zealand passports in favour of passports from their other country of citizenship, because of the needlessly short validity period imposed by the New Zealand Government.

On behalf of our ten thousand supporters, we have written to the Minister for Internal Affairs, seeking his support to open the discussion surrounding passport validity to public consultation, and to amend the *Passport Act 1992*, in particular s 5(1), to enable the reinstatement of ten year passports. Thus far, the Minister has not been supportive of the initiative, as he prefers to exclude New Zealand citizens by keeping discussions about this matter firmly behind closed doors. Incidentally, the Canadian Government recently undertook extensive public consultation regarding the validity of the Canadian passport and decided to increase passport validity from 5 years to 10 years while introducing biometric passports this year.

Having exhausted all other measures, *we seek your support for a Private Members Bill that would reinstate passport validity to 10 years.* Our other proposals are outlined overleaf.

I am sure you would agree that what we are proposing, will be of great benefit to all New Zealand Citizens. I thank you for your time and hopefully your support on reintroducing 10-year passports for New Zealand citizens.

Yours faithfully

*(Signed)*

Kyle Lockwood  
Spokesperson

