



Citizenship and  
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et  
Immigration Canada

Deputy Minister

Sous-ministre

Ottawa, Canada  
K1A 1L1

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Mr. Kevin Page  
Parliamentary Budget Officer  
Library of Parliament  
Ottawa ON K1A 0A9



Dear Mr. Page:

Thank you for your letter of November 4, 2011, concerning the fiscal impact of Bill C-4, *An Act to Amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* and *The Marine Transportation Security Act*. I apologize for the delay in responding.

At the present time, it is approximately 20 months from the time a person makes a refugee claim until the time the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) holds a hearing on their claim. Unsuccessful refugee claimants may seek Judicial Review of the IRB decision, the process of which may take several months. Once ready for removal, most persons may apply to Citizenship and Immigration Canada for a Pre-Removal Risk Assessment, which can take upwards of six months. Therefore, on average, the overall time from the refugee claim to removal is between four and five years.

To improve Canada's refugee system and address long processing times, the government introduced Bill C-11, the *Balanced Refugee Reform Act* (BRRA), which received royal assent on June 29, 2010. The BRRA includes a number of changes that will allow us to streamline the asylum process from point of claim to first-level hearing, ensure timely removals within one year of final negative decision, and ensure enhanced system integrity. These reforms are expected to significantly shorten current processing times for refugee applicants in Canada.

Bill C-4 proposes two major consequences for refugee claimants who are designated by the Minister as irregular arrivals. First, these persons are subject to automatic detention upon designation and an overall stricter detention regime. Second, upon a positive decision by the Refugee Protection Division of the IRB, these persons are subject to regular, in-person monitoring. Monitoring would consist of information-gathering interviews to aid in the initiation of cessation activities by officers of Public Safety at the

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Immigration Division of the IRB. The Bill would not, however, impose any expedited timelines for the processing of the refugee claims of irregular arrivals. These designated individuals would move through the refugee system at the same pace as a non-designated claimant. As above, upcoming reforms to Canada's refugee system will significantly improve processing times for all refugee claimants in Canada, including "designated arrivals". The Government is taking firm and reasonable actions to defend the integrity of our borders, protect our immigration and refugee system from abuse and combat human smuggling.

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Neil Yeates

cc: Mr. Luc Portelance, Canadian Border Services Agency