



# Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Labor weak and divided on border security**

It is now clear by Bill Shorten's own admission that what Labor did last year was to put a cheap tactical win in the Parliament ahead of the security of Australia's borders when they voted for the Phelps Medivac Bill.

By Bill Shorten's own admission Labor Senators have already voted to weaken Australia's borders – how will, Justine Keay, Julie Collins, Brian Mitchell and Ross Hart vote?

Labor promised to maintain our strong border security arrangements in 2007, they then promptly dismantled them.

We know from Labor's vote before Christmas that they really want to do the same again – they are weak on border protection and they have history.

The Phelps Bill was supported by their Labor/Green Senate colleagues, including Senators Anne Urquhart and Nick McKim.

Labor MPs must tell their electors what their convictions are on border protection.

Ms Keay in particular has form opposing boat turnbacks and offshore detention, saying on 24 July 2015, "I understand why some see it as an option to have in a tool chest of policy responses but I do not support it. I believe other, more humane options should be utilised".

She also famously unravelled on *Tasmania Talks* in 2016 when asked if she supported strong border protection measures: "Um sort of, a bit — either/or at the moment. Um, I would like to see people not die at sea obviously. But I would like to ensure that our asylum seekers are treated humanely."

Home Affairs has advised that the Phelps Bill will cost \$1.4 billion and ASIO has advised that it will open the door to migration for violent criminals and paedophiles, and potentially even terrorists.

No amount of decoys from Labor handlers this week will distract from the fundamental question: how will Keay, Collins, Mitchell and Hart vote on Australian border security as we know it?

ENDS

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