**Summary of the comments and online chat session (as of Friday Nov 20th):**

While a number of people were conscious that the Minister has to make many complex decisions, there were a great number for whom it was a simple proposition that Sam should be able to stay in Australia, 'no question'.  They recognised Sam’s extensive volunteer community work, his many supportive and grateful friends, the fact that he had made a home in Australia, the fact that he was lawful in Australia for many years due to an outstanding visa application not having been finalised, that he had not had an easy life here with no work or medical rights, and the difficulty he would have at his age to resettle in a highly industrialised country like Korea with no friends, little family, and no connections to obtain work.  He would suffer loss and grief, and loneliness.

Many people were concerned that a person who had spent so many years in Australia, including most of his adult life, would be expected to leave.  A number of people thought that there was no benefit to Australia in forcing Sam to leave, while many  benefits in allowing him to stay.  Many people commented on how hard-working Sam is.  There was recognition that letting Sam stay would be consistent with Australian values of fair go, service and mateship.

People appealed for the Minister to change his decision.   Many expressed the view that it would be simply humane and compassionate, to allow Sam to stay.  And some recalled particular experiences they had had in their lives where Sam made a positive difference.  Small maybe, but important.

**Some quotes in response to the article are:**

*»I support Sam staying. I admire people who do community work and who help build a sense of community for others. Without that, our society has no health. The whole concept of community has been under strain for decades from hardline economic forces so it is in great need of restoration not further damage...There is nothing to be gained by deporting Sam. It would be an inhumane act and only hurt him and his community here. I believe the government should contribute positively to community health by allowing Sam to stay on."*

*»Every week at Church, Sam organises birthday cards for every member of the community. He makes sure we all sign. He has helped bring our community together in* *lots of little ways like this. Please Minister Dutton intervene to support Sam Song remaining in Australia«*

*»I have known Sam for years. Over that time, he has been a great friend and shown himself to be kind, generous,caring and faithful. He consistently works hard to make* *our community a better place for everyone and is an all round good bloke just the type of person Australia needs. I would ask Minister Dutton to intervene with* *compassion. It makes no sense to deprive our community of this valuable member. Sam has done much for others, and would do even more given the chance.*

*»There certainly seem to be 'unique and exceptional circumstances' at play here. Sam should definitely be allowed to stay in Australia.«*

*Sam has been here for TWENTY THREE years, while an admin bungle had his application in limbo. It is that length of time that makes his case exceptional. «*

*»During that time, Sam's stay here wasn't unlawful. Several churches supported him financially as he wasn't allowed to be paid for work.«*

*»I've known him for several years now, and can vouch for his work ethic. Sam works as a volunteer as if he was getting paid for the work. He helps out every* *Monday night at a soup kitchen, cleans the church and looks after the grounds, runs marathons with all sponsorship money going to charity, looks out for members* *of his community who may be unwell, ensures every birthday is acknowledged and helps out in lots of practical and kind ways. He is the first person to pitch in and* *help, and the last to leave a function, after washing up and ensuring the place is clean. He is a hardworking man, and much loved by his community. «*

*»I urge Minister Dutton to heed his own Tribunal's recommendation, and allow him to stay.«*

*»I do not know Sam personally but reading the comments of people that do suggests this is just the kind of person we should be welcoming into our community, that he* *embodies all the values that Australians and Australia holds to be vital.*

*»I support Sam Song and wish for the Immigration Minister Mr Peter Dutton to reverse his decision and allow Sam Song to stay. Sam is one of the most positive people I* *have the privilege to know. He is and has been a strong contributor to our community for 23 years and he will always continue to be. It will serve no purpose to our* *society to deport him and it will be our community's loss. Please reconsider Sam's case and allow hi to stay in the community that he has made his home and family.«*

*»Sounds like Sam already has a home. My understanding is that Minister Dutton can intervene on compassionate grounds. He has been here 23 years...surely that* *invokes a compassionate response when thinking of the alternative sending* *a man back to a place where his connections and community are so clearly in Australia.* *Please Minister Dutton, intervene for Sam Song!«*

*»Please let Sam stay, Minister Dutton. He is exactly the sort of person that Australia need. If we can open our arms to people across the seas who have not demonstrated* *or contributed one iota of love and act of kindness to the Australia and her people, why can't we open our arms, and hearts, to Sam who, in the last 20something* *years, has done much for his community and the people who know him? Compassion sometimes is all we have to give, we have given much to so many people, and Sam has* *proven that he deserves every bit we can give.«*

*»I know Sam too. After my husband left me and my two young children he took my son to the football and bought him a photo of them together which he still keeps on his* *mantlepiece years later. It meant a lot to us this small kindness. Sam is a great guy someone Australia needs. I so hope that Minister Dutton reverses his decision and* *allows him to stay. After 23 years, with one family member in Korea and not close, he should be allowed to stay with the people who know and love him.*

*»No one is at fault here, least of all Sam. Nothing good will come from Sam's deportation; a lot of potential good will leave if he goes. Sam should stay ... he sets a fine* *example to us all.«*

*»No problems, good person, good character and is an asset to our society. For what it’s worth....welcome.«*

*»The answer to this is obvious to everyone with a brain and a heart. In these circumstances, I think we should be guided by the Australian values we are proud of generosity,* *a fair go, common sense. Sam clearly has these values...”*

*»Sam will be a blessing to all those around him wherever he goes. Please keep him here in Australia Mr Dutton.«*

*»Spread the love people! Of course Sam should be allowed to stay :)«*

*»I reckon Sam sounds like a great bloke. We need more of his community ethic, he'd be welcome in my community«*

*»Sam's long history of service to the Australian community is a testament to his willingness to tolerate and make the best of the very bad hand that luck has dealt him.* *His case calls for compassion and understanding, yes. But it is in the interests of all of us that he be allowed to stay in this country.«*

*»The most astonishing part of this article is that an administrative error took 13 years to sort out. For that reason alone, he should be allowed to stay. Unlike other recent* *arrivals, he is well and truly assimilated into our way of life....”*

*»I hope he can stay. It seems so unfair to make him leave :(«*

*»life throws us opportunities to test who we are, Sam should be assessed with kindness and compassion so that Sam and Australia will benefit«*

“*»Please, Minister Dutton, look at Sam's file again. Look at his life. Surely some compassion and common sense would reverse your decision.*

*If Sam has managed to find such constructive and connected ways to survive and make great contributions to our society while living under the constraints and* *uncertainties of bridging visas, one can only imagine how his life might blossom if given permanent residency and one day citizenship. He has invested his life in forming* *relationships and connections here, doing his utmost to live a meaningful life and to be a productive member of society under very difficult circumstances.*

*He is a valued* *member of our community and we would love to see what his future here might hold when free to participate fully in Australian society.*

*It is hard to fathom how compassion could not prevail in this circumstance. It makes no sense at all to allow someone to remain here in limbo on bridging visas for 23* *years and then expect that they can be tossed back to their country of origin where their ties and support are so weakened and to have to start all over again. It is just* *wrong.*

*To let Sam stay here, where he has friends, support and connections, to continue his life here with full rights to participate in our society...this is just the right thing to do.*

*Please reconsider your decision, and let Sam launch his life fully here. He is already one of us. We want to continue the journey with him.«*

*»This is a real person with a life in Australia and every reason to be allowed to continue to live here. He is a contributor to Australian society, and should be allowed to* *stay. I hope the Minister will look at the individual case and reconsider.«*

*»I know Sammy personally but have not seen him for a number of years. I have often wondered what had happened to him. I met him playing soccer many years ago and* *can vouch for the fact that he is one of the nicest and kindest people you could wish to know. He never mentioned much about his past so this is all a bit of a surprise to* *me. He must stay, people of this type are a rare breed.«*

“*»I know Sammy. He spent Christmas a few years ago with my family. He has worked in a soup kitchen for the homeless in St Kilda with my Mother and Daughter. My* *young daughter always tells me how funny Sammy can be.*

*The last time I saw Sammy he was in Canberra for a Running Festival. He didn't spend his time visiting the* *sites of Canberra or socialising he spent it in the City Square (Garrema Place) in the rain collecting funds for a charity. I offered to buy him lunch and he accepted but* *only after he raised some more money. Sammy always puts others before himself. Minister Dutton, this is the sort of person who I would be very proud to have as my* *'Australian' neighbour. Let him stay.«*

*»After 23 years, this place is home. How could it not be, for anyone in this position? As someone who's known Sam for several years, I can vouch for his contribution to* *his community. He does a lot of voluntary work, and works as if he was getting paid for it turns* *up every Monday evening to work in the Soup Kitchen, cleans the church* *and looks after the grounds, is the first to roll up his sleeves and the last person to leave an event after making sure the place is clean and tidied up, never forgets a* *birthday, and looks out for people who may be struggling. He is an extraordinarily kind and compassionate man. «*

*»Minister Dutton, please take the recommendation of your own Tribunal, and let him stay.«*

*»Sam is an amazing man who has done terrific things for the community. His home is here, his friends are here, his life is here. He is not a drain on the community and* *will continue to contribute in whatever way he can to help make people's lives better particularly* *the disadvantaged. He has everything he needs. Let him stay. Peter* *Dutton please reconsider.«*