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## **Exclusive Poll: Australians strongly support returning Julian Assange**

Julian Assange's health a serious concern as he faces extradition to the US

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Australians strongly support the return of Julian Assange to his home country, according to an exclusive Essential research poll. The findings come in the wake of the UK Home Secretary granting Julian's extradition to the US where he faces a 175-year prison sentence.

The poll released by the Australian Assange Campaign has revealed that of those who are aware of Assange's current circumstances, 88% either support calls for him to be returned to Australia or are undecided. Just 12% of people oppose his return.

The data shows that Australian citizens want the Australian government to take action in even greater numbers than the previous poll conducted by Essential research in March 2021. The Australian government has the power to request that Julian is brought home, but now is the time as Julian's life is on the line.

"There is a widespread feeling that enough is enough" says John Shipton, father of Julian Assange, who also features in 'ithaka', a documentary that recently aired on ABC about his fight for his son's freedom.

"Julian's physical health is in decline, he needs to be freed before it's too late" says Shipton, "I am doing what any parent would do when you have a child who needs your help."

The poll was conducted on June 27, just shortly after the UK had granted permission for Julian Assange to be extradited to the US, where he faces a 175-year prison sentence.

"What this poll shows," says Shipton, "is Australians overwhelmingly want their government to act to end Julian's torment."

Julian had a mini-stroke in 2021, and his family and medical experts have expressed deep concern about his health.

"Doctors for Assange are increasingly concerned about Assange's health, especially since his mini-stroke reported in October last year," said Dr Sue Wareham from Doctors for Assange.

"With a history of prolonged exposure to psychological torture, and what appears to be politically motivated medical neglect, the situation is extremely serious. Rather than isolating him for prolonged periods, with the stress of a planned extradition to a situation that could tip the balance towards suicide, he needs proper medical supervision and care."

"Australian governments have failed to take decisive action to protect this Australian citizen. We call on our government to intervene without further delay. It is unconscionable that Assange has been detained for years, convicted of nothing, while in deteriorating health. What does it take for an Australian Government to act to protect this man?"

Australian Assange Campaign Adviser Greg Barns SC said the poll results show that the new Albanese Government is right to be committed to ensuring that the United States ends its attempt to prosecute Julian for revealing the truth about war crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan.

“Prime Minister Albanese has rightly said this case must be brought to an end. These poll results show that the vast majority of Australians agree with him”, Mr Barns said.

Shipton, Dr Sue Wareha and Barns SC will be part of a delegation visiting Canberra this week, meeting with MPs and inviting them to join the Parliamentary Group of Friends to Bring Julian Home, chaired by Independent MP Andrew Wilkie. Several new MPs will be joining the group which will be announced on Thursday, and a [public action is now encouraging](#) people to write to their MPs with a day of action planned.

“We invite all MPs and Senators to join the Parliamentary Group. It’s an issue that is important among the electorate, it’s gone on too long, the time to act is now, Julian’s life is on the line’ says Shipton.

John Shipton, Dr Sue Wareham from Drs for Assange and Greg Barns SC are available for media interviews.

The full Essential Poll is available on request.

## **BIOS:**

### **DR SUE WAREHAM**

Dr Sue Wareham OAM is President of the Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia). She has spoken and written widely on matters related to peace and disarmament over several decades, with nuclear disarmament being a particular focus. She is on the board in Australia of ICAN (the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons) which was awarded the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize. Sue is also Secretary of Australians for War Powers Reform, which campaigns to change the way in which a decision to send the ADF to war overseas can be made, so that it must be a decision of the parliament, not the PM (with or without Cabinet). She worked in general practice in Canberra for over three decades.

### **GREG BARNES SC**

Greg Barns SC is a barrister and author. He is an adviser to the Australian Assange Campaign and has been since 2013. Greg is the author of 4 books on Australian politics and is a weekly columnist with the Hobart Mercury. He is a former National President of the Australian Lawyers Alliance and ran the 1999 Republic Referendum campaign. He is founder and chair of the Prisoners Legal Service in Tasmania.