

Victims and Courts Bill

RUNNING LIST OF ALL AMENDMENTS ON REPORT

*Tabled up to and including
25 February 2026*

[Amendments marked ★ are new or have been altered]

After Clause 5

LORD MESTON

★ After Clause 5, insert the following new Clause—

“Restriction on acquisition of parental responsibility for child born after conviction

A person is not eligible to acquire parental responsibility automatically under section 2 of the Children Act 1989 if, at the time of the child’s birth, they have been convicted of a serious sexual offence committed against a child and sentenced to a life sentence, or a term of imprisonment or detention of 4 years or more, or have been convicted of rape and the child was conceived as a result of that rape.”

Member’s explanatory statement

The Bill does not prevent an offender from automatically acquiring the parental responsibility for a child born even one day after sentencing. This amendment would remove the convicted offender’s eligibility for parental responsibility in respect of children born after sentencing.

LORD MESTON

★ After Clause 5, insert the following new Clause—

“Bail conditions

It shall be a condition of bail, if granted, to any person under investigation for, or charged with, rape or any other serious sexual offence that—

- (a) he should not have any direct or indirect contact with any minor child of whom that person is a parent or for whom he has parental responsibility, and

- (b) he should immediately inform any family court dealing with proceedings concerning any such child of that restriction on contact.”

Member's explanatory statement

The absence of clear child-related bail restrictions in every case can create the opportunity for, and risk of, continued coercion and intimidation.

After Clause 7

BARONESS BRINTON

After Clause 7, insert the following new Clause –

“Access to free court transcripts for victims

- (1) Victims of criminal offences shall be entitled to receive, without charge, court transcripts of –
 - (a) judicial summings-up, and
 - (b) bail decisions and conditions,
 which are relevant to their case.
- (2) The Secretary of State must ensure that such transcripts are provided within 14 days of a request.
- (3) The entitlement under subsection (1) shall apply irrespective of whether the victim gave evidence in the case.”

Member's explanatory statement

This new clause would give victims a right to receive, free of charge, court transcripts of judicial summings-up and bail decisions relevant to their case. It requires that transcripts be provided within 14 days of a request and clarifies that this right applies whether or not the victim gave evidence in the case.

LORD HACKING

After Clause 7, insert the following new Clause –

“Victim navigators

- (1) The Secretary of State must, within six months of the passing of this Act, make provision for each police force in England and Wales to have access to one or more independent victim navigators.
- (2) The purpose of an independent victim navigator under subsection (1) is to –
 - (a) liaise between the police force and potential victims of offences relating to slavery or human trafficking, and
 - (b) assist in the provision of specialist advice for either the police force or the potential victims.
- (3) The Secretary of State may by regulations provide further guidance on the functions of independent victim navigators.

- (4) Regulations under this section shall be made by statutory instrument, and may not be made unless a draft has been laid before and approved by resolution of each House of Parliament.”

Member's explanatory statement

This new clause seeks to implement the recommendation of the House of Lords Committee on the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (HL Paper 8) by introducing provisions for Independent Victim Navigators to be in operation on a national level in England and Wales, acting as a liaison between the police and potential victims of slavery or human trafficking in accessing the appropriate support.

After Clause 14

BARONESS BRINTON

- ★ After Clause 14, insert the following new Clause—

“Unduly lenient sentences: time limit

In paragraph 1 of Schedule 3 to the Criminal Justice Act 1988, at end insert “, subject to sub-paragraph 2.

- (2) The time limit of 28 days shall be extended in exceptional circumstances, which may include but not be limited to a failure of the relevant body to inform the victim and families of their rights under section 36 (reviews of sentencing).”

Member's explanatory statement

This amendment would allow for the 28-day timeframe to be extended in exceptional circumstances, and prompt criminal justice agencies to meet their obligation to inform of their rights and the tight time limit.

BARONESS BRINTON

- ★ After Clause 14, insert the following new Clause—

“Duty to inform victims and families of the unduly lenient sentencing scheme

After section 36 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988, insert—

“36A Duty to inform victims and families of the unduly lenient sentencing scheme

- (1) The Secretary of State must nominate a government department to inform victims and their families of their rights set out in section 36 (reviews of sentencing).
- (2) The information provided under subsection (1) must include the type of sentence and the time limit for application, and advise that applications must be made to the Attorney General.”

Member's explanatory statement

This amendment will ensure that victims are aware of the Unduly Lenient Sentencing scheme which presently has a strict 28-day timeframe in which to apply, there being no power to extend the time.

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