

# Victims and Courts Bill

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## COMMONS DISAGREEMENT AND REASONS

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*[The page and line references are to HL Bill 141, the Bill as first printed for the Lords]*

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### After Clause 7

#### LORDS AMENDMENT 1

- 1** 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) the Route to Verdict, 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.”

#### COMMONS REASON

*The Commons disagree to Lords Amendment 1 for the following Reason –*

- 1A** *Because this Amendment would impose undue pressure on the resources of His Majesty’s Courts and Tribunals Service and the Judicial Office.*

## LORDS AMENDMENT 2

2 After Clause 7, insert the following new Clause—

**“Application of the victims’ code in respect of victims of murder, manslaughter or infanticide abroad**

- (1) The Victims and Prisoners Act 2024 is amended as follows.
- (2) After section 4, insert—

**“4A Application of the victims’ code in respect of victims of murder, manslaughter or infanticide of a close family member abroad**

- (1) This section relates to victims as defined under section 1(2)(c) who are close family members of a British National resident in England and Wales who was the victim of—
  - (a) murder,
  - (b) manslaughter, or
  - (c) infanticide,
 committed outside the United Kingdom.
- (2) The Secretary of State must by regulations issue an appendix to the victims’ code, setting out how the code applies to victims in the circumstances set out in subsection (1).
- (3) The appendix must set out the services to be provided to victims as defined under subsection (1) by those persons based in England and Wales appearing to the Secretary of State to have functions of a public nature relating to—
  - (a) victims, or
  - (b) any aspect of the criminal justice system.
- (4) The appendix must make provision for services based in England and Wales which reflect the principles that victims require—
  - (a) information to help them understand the criminal justice process,
  - (b) access to services within England and Wales which provide them with emotional and practical support (including, where appropriate, specialist services),
  - (c) in circumstances where the criminal justice process is engaged in England and Wales, the opportunity to make their views heard in the criminal justice process, and
  - (d) the ability to challenge decisions which have a direct impact on them.
- (5) In setting out the services to be provided to victims under this section, the Secretary of State must specify the following—
  - (a) how such services will be provided with accessible information;
  - (b) how they access emotional and practical support.”

## COMMONS REASON

*The Commons disagree to Lords Amendment 2 for the following Reason—*

- 2A** *Because the Commons consider that the obligations to which Lords Amendment 2 would give rise are unworkable.*

#### LORDS AMENDMENT 3

- 3** After Clause 7, insert the following new Clause –

**“Publication of court transcripts of sentencing remarks**

- (1) Where a request is made for the sentencing remarks delivered in the Crown Court, the court must, subject to subsection (2), make those remarks publicly available online within 14 days of the request being received.
- (2) The court must, before publication, make the relevant victim(s) aware that they have a right to request anonymity, and if such a request is made, take the necessary steps to prevent the risk of identification of the victim, including through jigsaw identification.”

#### COMMONS REASON

*The Commons disagree to Lords Amendment 3 for the following Reason –*

- 3A** *Because this Amendment would impose undue pressure on the resources of His Majesty’s Courts and Tribunals Service and the Judicial Office.*

#### Clause 12

#### LORDS AMENDMENT 4

- 4** Leave out Clause 12

#### COMMONS REASON

*The Commons disagree to Lords Amendment 4 for the following Reason –*

- 4A** *Because Lords Amendment 4 would alter the financial arrangements made by the Commons, and the Commons do not offer any further Reason, trusting that this Reason may be deemed sufficient.*

#### After Clause 14

#### LORDS AMENDMENT 5

- 5** 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).”

## COMMONS REASON

*The Commons disagree to Lords Amendment 5 for the following Reason –*

- 5A** *Because this Amendment gives rise to legal uncertainty.*

## LORDS AMENDMENT 6

- 6** 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.””

## COMMONS REASON

*The Commons disagree to Lords Amendment 6 for the following Reason –*

- 6A** *Because the Victims’ Code already stipulates that victims will be informed of the unduly lenient sentence scheme.*

**Clause 17**

## LORDS AMENDMENT 7

- 7** Clause 17, page 18, line 33, leave out paragraph (b)

## COMMONS REASON

*The Commons disagree to Lords Amendment 7 for the following Reason –*

- 7A** *Because Lords Amendment 4 would alter the financial arrangements made by the Commons, and Lords Amendment 7 is consequential on that Amendment, and the Commons do not offer any further Reason, trusting that this Reason may be deemed sufficient.*

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*26 March 2026.*

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