

# PETER GIBSON MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

July 2021

*Dear Constituent*

Thank you for your email.

I firmly believe that every woman has the right to privacy and dignity when breastfeeding their child and the Government is unwavering in its support for this. It is deeply concerning to learn of cases in which this right has been not been respected by members of the public.

While I am unaware of any plans to change the Voyeurism Act, I welcome the Police Crime Sentencing and Court Bill which will provide a complete justice overhaul to make our communities safer and better equip our police to do so. The Bill seeks to give the police new powers and tools to protect the public while also investing hundreds of millions to deliver faster justice and further support victims of crime.

As you may know, a clause on voyeurism was tabled for the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill.

At this stage, I do not feel able to support a new clause as we await the results of the Law Commission's review of the law around taking, making and sharing intimate images without consent, including voyeurism offences and non-consensual photography in public places including images taken of breastfeeding. I understand that the Commission is due to publish its final set of recommendations in the spring of next year and the Government will consider this in full. However, I know the Committee are aware of the sense of urgency the Government feels on this matter.

In the meantime, I am encouraged that voyeurism will be included in the Government's Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy. Although legislation is important, there are other factors at play that need to be tackled, such as raising women's awareness of their rights and raising awareness in society at large of how unacceptable this behaviour is. It is welcome that the Government does not shy away from tackling the use of the internet and imagery as forms of criminal behaviour. In 2015, the Government introduced the offence of revenge pornography, and, during proceedings on the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, I know the Government listened to the victims of threats to use revenge porn and acted in that legislation to extend the offence to include threats to disclose private sexual images with an intent to cause distress.

In addition, the upcoming Online Safety Bill will set the framework for companies and the duty of care on tech companies in relation to members of the public.

*Member of Parliament for Darlington*

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More broadly, I welcome that the Equality Act 2010 outlaws the discrimination of any woman because she is breastfeeding. This applies to anyone providing services, benefits, facilities and premises to the public, public bodies, and further and higher education bodies.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to contact me and if I can ever be any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*yours sincerely  
Peter Gibson*

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