

PETER GIBSON MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

March 2023

Dear Constituent

Thank you for your email about protests and the public order bill.

Recent protest activity from a minority of individuals utilising guerrilla tactics has caused misery to the hard-working public, disrupted businesses, interfered with emergency services, cost millions in taxpayers' money, and put lives at risk.

Indeed, fuel supply has been disrupted by protesters tunnelling under oil terminals and cutting the brakes on tankers, and police officers have spent hours trying to unglue people's body parts from some of the UK's busiest and most dangerous motorways. This includes groups like Just Stop Oil, which alone has cost the police over £5.9 million in a matter of months.

The Government is therefore legislating to equip the police to better manage and tackle dangerous and highly disruptive tactics, as well as prevent major transport projects and infrastructure from being targeted by protestors. This follows the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PSCS) Act, having received Royal Assent at the end of the last parliamentary session, which introduced a number of measures to enable the police to better manage protests.

The new Public Order Bill seeks to: introduce new criminal offences of locking-on and going equipped to lock-on; make it illegal to obstruct major transport works such as HS2; create a new criminal offence for interfering with key national infrastructure; extend stop and search powers for police to search for and seize articles related to protest-related activity; and introduce Serious Disruption Prevention Orders where a breach of the order would constitute a criminal offence.

I am confident these new changes to public order law will put a stop to the relentless reoffending and significant disruption caused by a selfish minority of protestors which impinge on the rights of the British public to go about their daily lives in peace.

I look forward to ensuring the Bill receives the thorough scrutiny it commands as it progresses through Parliament. Please be assured I will be following developments closely.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again. If you would like to keep up to date with my activities as your Member of Parliament then please subscribe to my Darlington Matters newsletter using this link: www.petergibson.org/signup

Yours Sincerely
Peter Gibson

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