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Renters Reform Bill:

I have long supported calls for more rights and better protections for all tenants. I want to see the balance of power tilted towards renters, but I am concerned Ministers are not acting with the urgency required, despite committing to introducing reforms four years ago.

I share concerns that the Renters (Reform) Bill has made no progress since it was published in May 2023. There was enough time for it to have its Second Reading before summer recess started on 21 July, but the Government disappointingly chose not to schedule it in. This means renters will have to wait until at least 4 September for any progress on the Bill.

I worry about the real-world consequences of these delays. Millions of renters continue to live in the knowledge that they could be uprooted with little notice and minimal justification, due to section 21 'no fault' evictions. Since the Government first committed to banning these in 2019, over 60,000 households have been threatened with homelessness by section 21. This insecurity means many live in appalling conditions for fear of eviction if they complain. Ministers must avoid further delay.

As the Bill progresses through the House of Commons, I will support efforts to make improvements to it. I welcome measures such as the ban on section 21 and the end of rent review clauses, but I am concerned there are loopholes that could be used to exploit tenants, which need to be addressed. I also want to see Ministers go further in some respects, for example, by increasing the notice period for landlords from two months to four.

I worry that some proposals that were in the White Paper have been left out, including the ban on landlords refusing to rent to those who receive benefits or have children, known as 'no DSS'. Ministers have said they will bring forward legislation on this separately, but they need to explain why they decided not to include it in this Bill.

I will continue to support efforts to press the Government to make progress on this and ensure renters get the protection and long-term security they deserve.

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