

28<sup>th</sup> September 2017

Dear Constituents,

Thank you for contacting me about the Committee Stage of the Repeal Bill.

In the referendum, millions of people voted to leave the EU. The EU (Withdrawal) Bill, also known as the Repeal Bill, ensures that the UK does this in the smoothest possible way and this is why I support it. This Bill is not about whether we leave the EU or about the terms of our exit.

The Bill honours the referendum result and provides certainty for businesses. It repeals the European Communities Act 1972, which gives effect to EU law in the UK, and converts all EU law into UK law. It also provides ministers in the UK Government and in the devolved administrations with temporary powers to make corrections to the law. Without it there would be holes in our legal system and chaos for the British people.

The delegated power is important because not all laws will make sense after the UK leaves the EU. For example, references to the UK as a member of the EU will have to be removed and temporary delegated powers will allow ministers to do this in time for the UK's departure. I do not believe that it would be sensible for MPs to debate such changes every time they arise.

The Bill does not, however, allow the Government to bypass Parliament. MPs will still be able to scrutinise any changes introduced by ministers using delegated powers and major policy changes will be introduced as separate Bills. The Queen's Speech announced legislation on agriculture, immigration and trade. Future laws will be made in London, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast.

The Repeal Bill is receiving 8 days of debate in the House of Commons to discuss amendments tabled by MPs. This is more than the previous Labour Government provided for the Lisbon Treaty which was similar in its constitutional importance. The Government has said that further time may be considered if necessary.

The Prime Minister has promised that Parliament will have a say over the final withdrawal deal but it is not within the Government's power to unilaterally extend the negotiation period for further discussions. EU law is clear that the UK will leave the EU in March 2019 whether or not a withdrawal agreement is reached. By voting for this Bill, the UK will leave the EU in a smooth and orderly way. Voting against the Bill would create chaos and uncertainty.

For your information, I attach a letter I have recently received from the Rt Hon David Davis MP, Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, regarding this matter.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



**Alok Sharma MP**

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7 September 2017

Dear Colleague,

### **THE REPEAL BILL - SECOND READING**

As you will know, the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill is due to have its second reading on 7 and 11 September. I wanted to take this opportunity to remind you about the aims of the Bill and why its passage is so important, as well as drawing your attention to some updated explanatory materials.

Put simply, this Bill is essential. It is a necessary step on delivering on the referendum result and it helps to ensure the UK exits the EU with certainty, continuity and control. Without it, the UK's statute book would contain huge gaps once we left the EU, and there would also be major uncertainty about the meaning of many existing laws. The Bill is the only viable plan that has been put forward in this House for avoiding those gaps; and although I am happy to listen to suggestions from any quarter, I have heard no alternatives.

As a reminder, this Bill does not aim to deliver major policy changes but is a technical device that will achieve three simple aims:

- Repeal the European Communities Act 1972, and in so doing remove the supremacy of EU law and return control to the UK;
- Convert EU law into UK law, giving businesses continuity to operate in the knowledge that nothing has changed overnight, and providing certainty that rights and obligations will not be subject to sudden change; and
- Create the necessary temporary powers to correct the laws that no longer operate appropriately so that our legal system continues to function outside the EU.

This rightly applies equally across all parts of the UK so that regardless of where people live or businesses operate, the law is clear. The Bill will temporarily preserve the consistency provided by EU rules in operation for the UK so that we can work with the devolved administrations to ensure that once we have left the EU, policy making sits in the right place and closer to the people than ever before.

The Government is clear - under this Bill, no decisions currently made by the devolved administrations will be taken away from them as we leave the EU, and by the end of this process, we expect there to be a significant increase in the decision making power of the devolved administrations.

Whatever colleagues' views were during the referendum, it is in nobody's interest for there to be gaps in the law at the point at which the UK departs the EU. I recognise that the Bill is technically complex, and it is right and welcome that we will have the opportunity to debate the detail of the Bill at committee stage; but I hope all Members will be able to come together to support the overall approach. In the absence of alternatives, a vote against this Bill is a vote against an orderly withdrawal and a vote for a chaotic departure from the EU.

Updated information and resources on the Bill can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/information-about-the-repeal-bill](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/information-about-the-repeal-bill).

I look forward to continuing the discussion with parliamentary colleagues as the Bill reaches its second reading.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Davis', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**RT HON DAVID DAVIS MP  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION**