



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

2<sup>nd</sup> October 2020

*Dear Confrontant,*

**RE: THE CORONAVIRUS ACT 2020.**

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of the emergency legislation relating to the Government's response to Coronavirus; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

I would like to reassure you that all the measures in the *Coronavirus Act 2020* are temporary, and Ministers are clear that they are proportionate to the threat we face. It is important that they will only be used when strictly necessary, and will only be in place for as long as required to respond to the situation. I welcome measures in place to review this legislation on a six-monthly basis to ensure that the measures remain appropriate. It is clear that the virus will be with us for some time, and it is vital that we are able to take necessary steps to save lives.

The purpose of the legislation is to ensure that sufficient staff are available, and deployed where they are most needed, as well as supporting members of the public, containing and slowing the virus, and managing the deceased with respect and dignity.

I welcome that the Government has sought to offer Parliament additional scrutiny, offering MPs a vote on changes to regulations wherever that is possible, on England or UK-wide measures, before they come into place. I agree that it is vital for actions to be taken as swiftly as possible in the fight against Coronavirus, but I also believe it is important that Parliament has additional opportunities to thoroughly examine new measures before they are put in place, wherever that can be achieved.

I completely appreciate your concerns about the power conferred by the *Coronavirus Act* relating to people who may be infectious. I know that most people have been working extremely hard, and making numerous sacrifices, to comply with relevant public health advice. This provision simply seeks to ensure that isolation measures can be enforced if necessary. In practice, this power would take the form of a public health officer or police officer returning people to places that they have been required to stay at. For example, if someone has been contacted by NHS Test & Trace and is required to self-isolate for 14 days, and then is found out and about during that time, they would be returned home. Equally, the legislation empowers police and immigration officers to make sure that individuals attend testing or treatment facilities as required.




From a personal point of view, if on the one hand someone with the virus was recklessly mixing with vulnerable people and refusing to stop, I would want something to be done about it. On the other hand, for less clear cut breaches, I would want the police to exercise their discretion and appeal to people's sense of reason and responsibility to society. It is also important that measures like this are kept under close review by Parliament and remain temporary.

I understand that these measures may seem intimidating, as they are unlike anything we have ever known, and I am conscious that the overwhelming majority of people are following the guidance and obeying self-isolation instructions. However, we must be prepared to enforce these measures, to ensure that the small number of people who do not comply are not putting lives at risk by their behaviour.

Whilst not necessarily the response you wanted to receive, I do hope you find this information useful and I will continue to monitor this issue and scrutinise the steps the Government is taking closely.

Once again, thank you for having taken 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.

*With best wishes,*  


**TOM PURSGLOVE MP  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**