

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

11th November 2020

Dear Constance,

RE: ANIMAL WELFARE (SENTENCING) BILL.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of your concerns regarding animal cruelty sentencing; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

We are a nation of animal lovers, with over 40 percent of us keeping a pet. I agree that there is no place in this country for animal cruelty and we must ensure that those who abuse animals are met with the full force of the law. I am therefore pleased that the *Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Bill* has now passed its Second Reading and is backed by the Government, which will do all it can to support its swift passage through the Commons and the Lords as soon as possible.

The new Bill will enable tougher prison sentences for the most serious perpetrators of animal cruelty, from the current maximum of six months to up to five years. I believe that this increase in sentencing will send a clear message that this behaviour will not be tolerated. The maximum five-year sentence will become one of the toughest punishments in Europe, strengthening the UK's position as a global leader on animal welfare.

I am aware that a public consultation found 70 percent of people supported the proposals for tougher prison sentences and am encouraged that the planned change in the law means courts will be able to take a tougher approach to cases such as dog fighting, abuse of puppies and kittens, or gross neglect of farm animals.

Certainly, I welcome the steps the Government is taking to elevate our reputation for animal welfare in this country. In 2018, Ministers modernised the regulation of dog breeding, pet sales, animal boarding, horse riding and performing animals legislation. More recently, the Government published a new welfare code for pigs, introduced a ban on the commercial third-party sales of puppies and kittens in England, and launched a national communications campaign to help people to make more informed choices when sourcing a new pet.

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