



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

23rd August 2023

Jean Contreant

RE: MODERN SLAVERY & MIGRANTS

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of your concerns about modern slavery and migrants. I have read your comments with interest.

I welcome that my ministerial colleagues remain committed to tackling the heinous crime of modern slavery and I am proud that here in the UK we have a world-leading response.

However, it is clear that people are abusing our system to frustrate their removal when they have no right to be here. This is preventing genuine victims getting the support they deserve. We cannot focus our support on those who need it most, or effectively control our borders, without tackling illegal migration facilitated by evil people smugglers. Our modern slavery protections are being exploited and the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), the process that identifies and supports victims of modern slavery by connecting them with appropriate support, is no longer working as intended.

I understand that the new *Illegal Migration Act 2023* means that anyone who enters the UK illegally will be disqualified from using modern slavery rules to prevent removal. If someone is identified as a potential victim of modern slavery, the Government will ensure they are safely returned home from where they were removed against their will, or to another safe country. Removal from the UK may only be deferred where a person is co-operating with law enforcement agencies in an investigation into the circumstances of their trafficking. This will mean that genuine victims are protected, while preventing people from abusing our modern slavery laws to thwart their removal from the UK.

I look forward to continuing to support the Home Secretary in her work to combat illegal Channel crossings and the exploitation of the UK's modern slavery provisions.

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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Tom Pursglove'.

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE