FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Call for written evidence: Fire Safety Bill

Do you have relevant expertise and experience or a special interest in the Fire Safety Bill, which is currently passing through Parliament?

If so, you can submit your views in writing to the House of Commons Public Bill Committee which is going to consider this Bill.

The Public Bill Committee is now able to receive written evidence. **The sooner you send in your submission, the more time the Committee will have to take it into consideration.**

The Public Bill Committee will scrutinise the Bill line by line. The first sitting of the Public Bill Committee will be on a date to be confirmed and the Committee is scheduled to report by Thursday 25 June 2020. **However, please note that when the Committee concludes its consideration of the Bill it is no longer able to receive written evidence and it can conclude earlier than the expected deadline of 5.00pm on Thursday 25 June 2020. You are strongly advised to submit your written evidence as soon as possible.**

Aims of the Bill

The Fire Safety Bill amends the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and is expected to result in greater clarity over responsibility for fire safety in buildings containing more than one home.

Following the Grenfell Fire in 2017 the Government have taken a number of steps around fire safety, and this Bill forms part of that response. It is part of a series of changes by the Government to both fire safety and building safety more generally, with further primary and secondary legislation to follow.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 consolidated a number of different pieces of fire legislation. It applies to all non-domestic premises, including communal areas of residential buildings with multiple homes. The Order designates those in control of premises as the responsible person for fire safety and they have a duty to undertake assessments and manage risks. The Order is enforced by Fire and Rescue Authorities.

The Bill clarifies that for any building containing two or more sets of domestic premises the Order applies to the building’s structure and external walls and any common parts, including the front doors of residential parts. It also clarifies that external walls in the order include “doors or windows in those walls” and “anything attached to the exterior of those walls (including balconies).” These amendments are expected to provide for increased enforcement action in these areas, particularly where remediation of aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding is not taking place.
This Bill extends and applies to England and Wales. Separate fire safety legislation is in place in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Fire Safety is devolved in Wales but the Bill amends the shared legislation, with the same delegated powers applying to English and Welsh Ministers.

The Bill also provides English and Welsh Ministers with a regulation making power to amend the type of buildings the order applies to in the future.

**Follow the progress of the Fire Safety Bill**

The *Fire Safety Bill 2019–21* was introduced to the House of Commons on 19 March 2020. **Second reading** was held on 22 April 2020.

- **Bills before Parliament: Fire Safety Bill 2019–21**
- **Read Explanatory Notes: Fire Safety Bill 2019–21**
- **House of Commons Library Briefing Paper**

This Bill is now being considered by a **Public Bill Committee** which will scrutinise the Bill line by line. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the work of Public Bill Committees has been temporarily suspended. The first sitting of the Public Bill Committee will be on a date to be confirmed and the Committee is scheduled to report by Thursday 25 June 2020. The Bill Committee is now able to receive written evidence.

**Guidance on submitting written evidence**

**Deadline for written evidence submissions**

The Public Bill Committee is now able to receive written evidence. **The sooner you send in your submission, the more time the Committee will have to take it into consideration and possibly reflect it in an amendment.** The order in which amendments are taken in the Committee will be available in due course under **Selection of Amendments on the Bill documents pages**. Once the Committee has dealt with an amendment it will not revisit it.

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**What should written evidence cover?**

Your submission should address matters contained within the Bill and concentrate on issues where you have a special interest or expertise, and factual information of which you would like the Committee to be aware.

Your submission could most usefully:

- suggest amendments to the Bill, with supporting explanation; and
• (when amendments are published) support or oppose amendments tabled to the Bill by Members of Parliament, with supporting explanation

It is helpful if the submission includes a brief introduction about you or your organisation. The submission should not have been previously published or circulated elsewhere.

If you have any concerns about your submission, please contact the Scrutiny Unit (details below).

How should written evidence be submitted?

Your submission should be emailed to scrutiny@parliament.uk. Please note that submissions sent to the Government department in charge of the Bill will not be treated as evidence to the Public Bill Committee.

Submissions should be in the form of a Word document. A summary should be provided. Paragraphs should be numbered, but there should be no page numbering. Essential statistics or further details can be added as annexes, which should also be numbered.

As a guideline, submissions should not exceed 3,000 words.

Please include in the covering email the name, address, telephone number and email address of the person responsible for the submission. The submission should be dated.

What will happen to my evidence?

The written evidence will be circulated to all Committee Members to inform their consideration of the Bill.

Most submissions will also be published on the internet as soon as possible after the Committee has started sitting.

Those making a submission to a Committee inquiry should note the following:

• Committees publish most of the written evidence they receive on the internet (where it will be accessible to search engines).
• If you do not wish your submission to be published, you must clearly say so and explain your reasons for not wishing its disclosure. The Committee will take this into account in deciding whether to publish. If you wish to include private or confidential information in your submission to the Committee, please contact the Clerk of the committee to discuss this. The Scrutiny Unit (details below) will be able to provide you with contact details for the clerk.
• A Committee is not obliged to accept your submission as evidence, nor to publish any or all of the submission even if it has been accepted as evidence. This may occur where a submission is very long or contains material to which it is inappropriate to give parliamentary privilege (see Guide for Witnesses for further information on parliamentary privilege).
Material already published elsewhere should not form the basis of a submission, but may be referred to within a submission, in which case it should be clearly referenced, preferably with a hyperlink.

You should be careful not to comment on matters currently before a court of law, or matters in respect of which court proceedings are imminent. If you anticipate such issues arising, you should discuss with the Clerk of the Committee how this might affect your submission.

Once submitted, no public use should be made of any submission prepared specifically for the Committee unless you have first obtained permission from the Clerk of the Committee. If you are given permission by the Committee to publish your evidence separately, you should be aware that you will be legally responsible for its content.

Evidence which is accepted by the Committee may be published online at any stage; when it is so published it becomes subject to parliamentary copyright and is protected by parliamentary privilege.

Once you have received acknowledgement that the evidence has been published you may publicise or publish your evidence yourself. In doing so you must indicate that it was prepared for the Committee, and you should be aware that your publication or re-publication of your evidence may not be protected by parliamentary privilege.

Public Bill Committees do not investigate individual cases of complaint or allegations of maladministration.

Data protection

The personal information you supply will be processed in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 for the purposes of attributing the evidence you submit and contacting you as necessary in connection with its processing.

The Clerk of the House of Commons is the data controller for the purposes of the Act.

If you have any queries or concerns about the collection and use of this information please advise the committee team providing your full contact details.

For more information please see House of Commons Data Protection Information

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