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Dr Hywel Francis MP
Chair
Joint Committee on Human Rights
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Dear Hywel

IMMIGRATION BILL

As you will be aware, the Immigration Bill was announced in the Queen's Speech in May. The Bill is being published today, and I will be taking the Bill through the House of Commons.

The Bill has three main themes:

- Reform to the removals and appeals system, making it easier and quicker to remove those with no right to be here. Enforcement will be quicker and simpler. There will be fewer stages in the removals process and appeals will be limited to those who have made an asylum, human rights or EU application, and will more often be heard out of country;
- Ensuring that the Courts have regard to Parliament's view of what the public interest requires when considering Article 8 of the ECHR in immigration cases;
- Ensuring that illegal migrants cannot access public services to continue living in the UK; such as renting accommodation, holding a driving licence and opening a bank account. It will also ensure migrants with limited immigration status make a contribution to the NHS, and clamp down on migrants' ability to enter into sham marriages and civil partnerships.

Taken together, these measures aim to make the UK the least attractive destination for illegal migrants, reinforcing the message that we welcome legal migrants who contribute to our economy and society but we will take firm action against those who break the rules.

I am pleased to enclose a copy of the ECHR memorandum which we have published today alongside the Bill.

The Committee will wish to scrutinise the Bill in the normal way and may have a number of issues which it will want to explore further before publishing its report. I will respond to any questions that the Committee may have. To ensure a prompt response, it would be helpful if any correspondence from you could be copied to the Bill Manager (Andrew Elliot: Andrew.Elliot8@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk, tel. 020 7035 6190).

Yours
Mark

Mark Harper MP