



Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales
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11 November 2025

Rt Hon David Lammy MP
102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ

Dear Lord Chancellor,

I am deeply concerned about proposals in the Sentencing Bill which would allow the automatic re-release of the vast majority of offenders recalled to prison after 56 days.

As an independent voice for victims and survivors of domestic abuse, I recognise that action must be taken to relieve the pressure on prison places. However, this must not be at the expense of victims' safety.

Domestic abuse perpetrators who are recalled are among the most dangerous. They are fixated on their victims, know everything about them and will stop at nothing to maintain control. When they are released, we know they are likely to return to harassing, stalking and abusing their victim. While these despicable behaviours may rightly see them recalled to prison, victim's lives will likely have been put at risk in the process.

Re-releasing these perpetrators in as little as 8 weeks sends the wrong message to victims and abusers. It tells perpetrators that they can continue their abuse with impunity and will embolden some of them to escalate their behaviour, which could lead to devastating consequences.

Any offender who is recalled to prison for a breach against their victim must be held in prison until they are assessed as safe to be let out. These enhanced checks would prioritise the safety of victims, keeping the most dangerous abusers in prison until their risk has been reduced.

Victims should feel confident that, if their perpetrator is sent back to prison for harming them, they will face consequences. Instead, many will be put in danger as their perpetrator enters a cycle of escalating abuse and recall – undermining any remaining faith they have in the justice system.

Measures within this Bill will significantly increase demand on policing and Probation, services which are already overstretched. Ensuring the most dangerous and prolific abusers are not automatically released would support officers to keep their communities – and the most vulnerable victims – safe.

When introducing the Sentencing Bill in Parliament in September, you said that “victims must be at the heart of our system”. Without the changes outlined above, the government is moving away from that aim.

There are many parts of this Bill which will undoubtedly support the mission to tackle violence against women and girls. However, without adding enhanced measures around recall, this will not become a reality. Victims and survivors will be put in harm’s way.

With the continued delays to the publication of the VAWG Strategy and the expansion of schemes which reduce the time perpetrators spend in prison, many victims and survivors will rightly be wondering what the government is doing for them. By acting to include the safeguards around recall, you have an opportunity to address these concerns and demonstrate the government’s remains committed to halving VAWG in a decade. I urge you to intervene, so perpetrators aren’t given free rein to continue their abuse.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Nicole Jacobs', with a stylized, cursive script.

Dame Nicole Jacobs

Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales