



Nusrat Ghani MP
Minister of State for Industry and Investment Security
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street, SW1H 0ET

To: All MPs

18 January 2023

Dear Colleagues,

RETAINED EU LAW (REVOCATION AND REFORM) BILL

As you will be aware, the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill will be returning to the floor of this House today, Wednesday 18 January 2023 for its Report stage.

The intention of this Bill is to deliver on the Government's commitment to make it easier to preserve, repeal or amend retained EU law that was never intended to sit on our statute book indefinitely, enabling the country to further seize the benefits of Brexit. There is no intent to diminish the rights and protections of UK citizens. This is an enabling bill that will make it possible for us to deliver Brexit.

Feedback from Members of this House has cited concern around key areas such as environmental protections and workers rights. I would like to highlight that this Government has committed at the dispatch box that:

- a. the Bill would not weaken environmental protections;
- b. the Government would continue to honour its commitment to protecting workers' rights;
- c. as a priority, the Government would take the necessary action to safeguard the substance of any retained EU law and legal effects required to operate international obligations within domestic law.

The Government would like to reassure you that the repeal of maternity rights is not, and has never been, Government policy. Our high standards in maternity rights are not dependent on us mirroring the same rules as the EU, rather, the UK has gone further and moved faster than the EU in the past. For instance, we provide a year of maternity leave with the option to convert to shared parental leave to enable parents to share care, whilst the EU minimum maternity leave is just 14 weeks. There also exist other examples where this Government has committed more maternity support to mothers than the EU minimum requirements.

More generally, this Government has no intention of abandoning our strong record on workers' rights, having raised the domestic standards over recent years to make them some of the highest in the world. These high standards were never dependent on our membership of the

EU, and in numerous areas the UK provides for stronger protections for workers than are required by EU law. For instance, the entitlement of UK workers to receive 5.6 weeks of annual leave compared to the EU requirement of 4 weeks.

In regards to Environmental standards, the UK is proud to be a world leader in environmental protections and continually look to maintain this status. This Government has clear environmental and climate goals, such as those set out in the Environment Act 2021, the 25 Year Environment Plan and the Net Zero Strategy respectively. We are committed to delivering our legally binding target to halt nature's decline by 2030.

Our review into the substance of retained EU law in a cross-government collaborative exercise has so far uncovered 2,400 pieces of retained EU law which remain in effect on the UK statute book. Departments are already hard at work reviewing the suitability of these pieces of retained EU law for the UK. We have published the public dashboard of retained EU law to ensure that there is maximum transparency on the Government's progress of reforming retained EU law, and this will be updated regularly to reflect the plans and actions taken.

Addressing each of these individually in many cases would have to be done by primary legislation, which would be impractical and would take decades to complete. Each Department will be responsible for reviewing its own Retained EU law. It is right and proper that this Bill will make it easier for it to be removed or updated and that this Parliament has a key role in scrutinising proposed amendments to retained EU law.

Preserving, repealing or amending retained EU law will help us reform the UK regulatory system and will allow us to create a new agile and pro-growth regulatory framework that puts consumers first and gives businesses the confidence to innovate and invest in Britain. These reforms will remove those regulations that are unduly burdensome, outdated and no longer fit for purpose, which do not compromise on the rights and protections that are so important to our four great nations. We will replace them with more appropriate regulations that are proportionate and of high standard to improve the competitiveness of the UK economy.

The Bill will sunset Retained EU law by 2023, which includes a targeted and limited extension power to 2026, as the Prime Minister has committed. In enabling us to preserve, repeal or amend EU legislation, it is a core part of delivering Brexit.

Yours sincerely,



Nusrat Ghani
Minister for Industry and Investment Security