



Petitions Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

Tel 020 7219 4887 Email petitionscommittee@parliament.uk

Website www.parliament.uk/petitions-committee

The Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP
Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

21 November 2023

Dear Secretary of State

I am writing to ask for an update on when the Government will introduce legislation for a new, specific, criminal offence for pet abduction. The Government included [plans to make pet theft an offence](#) in the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill, which was withdrawn in June 2023.

The Minister of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, said that once the Bill was withdrawn, the Government would take forward measures in the Bill separately, as single-issue bills, during the remainder of the Parliament.

However, despite the Government's commitments, legislation to make pet theft an offence has not yet been introduced, and was not included in the 2023 King's Speech, which set out the Government's legislative programme for the remainder of this Parliament.

The Government's most recent response to an e-petition on this subject said that it "would be supportive of legislation on pet abduction when parliamentary time allows". This falls far short of the Government's previous commitments, as outlined above.

The Government's failure to bring forward this legislation will be a serious disappointment to the many thousands of people who have signed petitions calling for this.

I would be grateful if you could provide an urgent update on the Government's plans to make pet theft a specific criminal offence by Wednesday 6 December, so that the Committee can update petitioners.

Yours sincerely

Cat Smith

Cat Smith MP
Chair of the Petitions Committee