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4th March 2024

**COMMUNITY AND SUSPENDED SENTENCES (NOTIFICATION OF DETAILS) BILL: SECOND
READING**

I am writing to inform you, in your capacity as Chair of the Justice Select Committee, that on Friday 23 February the Community and Suspended Sentences (Notification of Details) Bill, brought by Ruth Jones MP, had its Second Reading in the House of Commons. I am pleased to confirm that the Government is supporting this Bill.

This Bill will improve the ability of probation and Youth Offending Teams to monitor offenders and protect the public by ensuring that, while an offender is serving a sentence in the community, the responsible officer has the information that they need to keep tabs on that individual, including if they change their name and their contact information. Swift and clear action can be taken where an offender does not comply.

Proposed reforms

This Bill will place a new requirement on adult offenders serving a community order or a suspended sentence order to inform the responsible officer if they change their contact details or change their name. This will capture not just formal legal changes of name but also the use of a different name from the one known to probation, such as an online alias. For offenders under the age of 18, these measures will apply to those serving referral orders and youth rehabilitation orders. The responsible officer will have the power to initiate breach proceedings if the offender does not comply with this requirement.

This legislation will bring the law on sentences served in the community in line with the law under secondary legislation relating to offenders on licence following release from custody (the Criminal Justice (Sentencing) (Licence Conditions) (Amendment) (No.2) Order 2022) which was commenced last year. The measures in this Bill cannot be established by secondary legislation under the Sentencing Act 2020.

This Bill will therefore ensure consistency across the sentencing framework meaning that, regardless of the sentence an offender is serving, probation and Youth Offending Teams are aware of the name(s) that offenders are using and have up-to-date contact details for the purposes of effectively supervising them.

I hope you welcome this Bill, and that Ruth Jones MP can count on your support during the passage of the Bill through Parliament.

RT HON EDWARD ARGAR MP