



Procedure Committee

Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP
Leader of the House of Commons
Via email only

18 March 2024

Dear Leader,

Proxy voting for Members called for jury service

Thank you for your letter of 7th March regarding proxy votes for Members who are called for jury service.

As you are aware, the Committee has been actively engaged in various inquiries concerning proxy voting throughout the course of this Parliament, with our most recent inquiry concluding in March 2023. Additionally, in January 2024, the Committee responded to the House of Commons Commission's proposals on risk-based exclusions, which included proposals to extend proxy votes to Members accused of serious violent and sexual offences.

We note the challenges Members may face when called for jury service while also having parliamentary and constituency responsibilities to fulfil, as well as the options that are available to Members in those circumstances such as deferral to a more suitable time. The Committee takes the view, however, that it is not necessary for it to look into this matter – it is ultimately a matter for the Government to decide whether it wishes to extend proxy voting to cover such scenarios, and then to bring forward a motion to amend Standing Orders accordingly, so that the House can express its view on the matter.

If the Government wishes to explore whether or not Members should be exempt from jury service more broadly, we suggest that this matter is raised with the Justice Select Committee to inquire into the issue.

I am copying this letter to Sir Robert Neill MP, Chair of the Justice Select Committee, the Chief Whip, Rt Hon Simon Hart MP, and the Speaker, Rt Hon Sir Lindsay Hoyle MP.

Yours ever,

Rt Hon Dame Karen Bradley MP
Chair of the Procedure Committee