



Modernisation Committee

HOUSE OF COMMONS LONDON SW1A 0AA
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From the Rt Hon Sir Alan Campbell MP

Jamie Stone MP
Chair of the Petitions Committee

11 March 2026

Dear Jamie

I am writing to follow up on our conversation earlier today regarding our inquiry into Backbench Business Committee and Petitions Committee debates, which we will be launching next week.

This is conducted in the wider context of our work considering the effective use of time in the House of Commons, as announced in the committee's next steps memorandum, published in February 2025. We look forward to working with you and the Chair of the Backbench Business Committee and your committees as we progress this work. We also hope that you and your committee will provide a written submission in response to our terms of reference which I have listed below.

1. Is the current allocation of time for Petitions and Backbench Business debates appropriate and effective?

- **What impact, if any, does the timing and scheduling of debates have on attendance?**

2. Are the 35 days allocated to the Backbench Business Committee appropriate in the context of other demands on the House's time?

3. Is the current allocation of Backbench Business debates between the Chamber (27 days) and Westminster Hall (8 days) correct?

4. Are there any improvements that could be made to the Backbench Business Committee's process to agree applications for backbench business debates (including ensuring debates are popular amongst members and on topical subjects)?

5. Are the existing mechanisms available for the Petitions Committee to hold debates in the Chamber (to apply via Backbench Business Committee, or to be allocated time by the Government) sufficient or should the Petitions Committee have guaranteed time in the Chamber?

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We are keen to hear your thoughts as we progress in this inquiry and will be inviting you to appear before the committee to put your views on the record towards the end of our inquiry. If you have any questions in the meantime, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me or the team.

Yours,
Alan

RT HON SIR ALAN CAMPBELL MP