

May 2018

Dear Constituent

Thank you for contacting me about protecting emergency service workers.

We owe emergency service workers a debt of gratitude for the courage, commitment and dedication they demonstrate in carrying out their duties, which is why the Government is supporting the Private Member's Bill to protect emergency workers.

The Bill would create a statutory aggravating factor. This means that when a person is convicted of a specific offence, the judge would have to consider the fact it was committed against an emergency worker as an aggravating factor in determining the sentence within the maximum allowed for the particular offence. This will cover assault causing ABH, wounding or inflicting GBH, and manslaughter. Separately, the Bill will create a new aggravated version of the offences of common assault and battery when committed against an emergency worker, for which the maximum allowed for common assault will be increased from six months to 12 months.

I also welcome the fact that the Government has made clear it supports the amendment which will see sexual assault added to the list of offences to which the Bill's statutory aggravating factor will apply.

The Bill will cover emergency workers, which includes police, prison officers, custody officers, fire service personnel, search and rescue services and certain healthcare workers including ambulance personnel.

This crucial change will send a clear message that we will not tolerate attacks on them, and we will work with MPs from all parties to ensure those who are violent face the full force of the law.

Yours sincerely



Richard Benyon