**{YOUR FULL NAME}**

**{YOUR FULL ADDRESS}**

**{YOUR POSTCODE}**

**{EMAIL ADDRESS}**

**{DATE}**

Dear **{MP NAME}**,

My name is **{YOUR NAME}** and I am a constituent of **{YOUR CONSTITUENCY/AREA WHERE YOU LIVE}**. I am writing to you because I would like to see changes made to the Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection (known as the IPP sentence); a type of indefinite sentence given to 8,711 people between 2005 and 2013 for a wide range of major and minor crimes, and abolished by the Government in 2012. I have enclosed further information about the sentence, in case you are not already aware of it.

**I would like you to take forward my concerns, set out below, by backing the amendment that Bob Neill MP has stated he will propose in the Victims and Prisoners Bill, which would legislate for the provision of a resentencing exercise for everybody serving an IPP sentence, carefully planned by an expert group. I would also like to know if you will support this amendment?**

As a member of the public, I am concerned that thousands of people are still serving an abolished sentence in prison, and I do not think such a sentence has any place in our justice system. As you may already be aware, the IPP sentence was abolished because it was agreed to be unjust and ineffective. Thousands of people were given a life sentence for crimes that would never attract a life sentence today. The sentence was based on the premise that we can accurately predict a person’s risk of committing future crime; something that is complex, difficult, and flawed. It is a stain on the reputation of our justice system that thousands of people are still subject to an abolished sentence, and have served years longer than the time it was agreed they deserved as punishment. It is also reprehensible that their families and children continue to suffer the consequences. **{IF YOU WANT TO, ADD YOUR EXTRA THOUGHTS ON THE SENTENCE HERE, AND EDIT THE ABOVE TO REFLECT YOUR VIEWS}**

I would like you to support the changes to the IPP sentence being proposed by UNGRIPP ([www.ungripp.com](http://www.ungripp.com)), who campaign for meaningful change to the IPP sentence. These are:

* **Proportional resentencing of everybody serving an IPP sentence.** This would restore justice.
* **Reform the license conditions of the IPP sentence**, to give people a fair chance of staying out of prison.
* **A comprehensive package of support for everyone affected by the IPP sentence**, which has the twin principles of reducing reoffending *and* repairing the damage caused by serving an unjust, ineffective and legally abolished sentence. It should include support for families affected.

These changes have now also been put forward by the Justice Select Committee Report on the IPP sentence. The report gives a damning indictment of a regime of indefinite detention that has caused widely documented harm, and departed from public notions of justice, fairness and proportionality.

The Committee stated that: IPP sentences are “irredeemably flawed” and call for a comprehensive re-sentencing programme.

The Committee concluded that even though there are ways to improve how the IPP sentence works, there is no way to truly fix it. Their main recommendation is a resentencing exercise. That means that everybody serving IPP would be individually resentenced by a judge, to a sentence available under current sentencing law, following the principle of balancing public protection with justice, judicial independence, and the appointment of an independent panel to implement the exercise. I would like you to advocate for this legislative change.

You can read the full report here: https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/102/justice-committee/news/173280/justice-ipp-sentences-report-published-22-23/

I hope to hear back from you soon**,** to hearthe ways you intend to address this on my behalf. If you’re unable to address this personally, I would like to request that you escalate my letter to the relevant Minister or department.  Please do keep me informed of any progress made.  I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

**{YOUR NAME}**

**What is an IPP sentence?**

The Criminal Justice Act 2003 introduced the Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection, known as the IPP sentence.

The IPP was an indefinite sentence, potentially life, that could be given for any of 153 crimes, including affray and criminal damage. Many of these crimes had never previously been given a life sentence.

Before 2005, life sentences were reserved for murder, and the most serious cases of manslaughter, GBH, robbery with violence, and perpetrators of sexual violence.

Between 2005 and 2013, 8,711 people in England & Wales were given the IPP sentence. Prior to its implementation, it was predicted that only 900 people would receive this type of sentence, as it was intended for only the most serious offences.

In 2012, following a ruling against the IPP sentence by the European Court of Human Rights for breaching Article 5(1), it was abolished by the Government. But it was not abolished retrospectively. On 31st March 2023, 2,916 people were still serving an IPP sentence in prison.

Until recently there was little precedent for retrospective changes to law. However, the introduction of the Terrorist Offenders (Restriction of Early Release) Act 2020 indicates that, where there is political will, retrospective changes will be enacted.

Apart from a handful of successful appeals, all people released on an IPP continue to serve their sentence in the community, for life.

**How does the IPP sentence work?**

The IPP is divided into three parts. The judge decides how many years a person must spend in prison as punishment for their crime (known as a ‘tariff’). Once that time is served, they remain in prison indefinitely, but may apply to the Parole Board for release. If they achieve release, they must then serve a licence for at least 10 years, but potentially the rest of their life. The licence includes restrictions on where they live, who they see, and what they do.

Tariffs were set based on how many years imprisonment a person would receive before the IPP sentence was introduced. Because it covered so many crimes – many not serious - tariffs were often very short. The shortest was 28 days. The tariff was then followed by indefinite confinement in the interests of public protection, and, if release was achieved, recall on a public protection basis. It is the ongoing, indeterminate nature of the sentence which has caused today’s problems.

**Today’s picture**

[1,355 people serving an IPP sentence in prison have never been released.](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly) 98% are now over tariff. 47% have served between 10 and 18 years beyond their tariff. That’s 10-18 years longer than the judge thought they deserved for their crime.

[1,561 of the people currently serving an IPP in prison were recalled.](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly) In 2022, 74% of IPP recalls were for non-compliance, not further offending. The Government forecast that [the recalled IPP population would double between](https://www.theyworkforyou.com/wrans/?id=2020-12-07.125975.h) 2020 and 2026.

[The self-harm incident rate for those serving an IPP is more than double that of those serving a determinate sentence.](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics)  So far, 81 people serving an IPP sentence have killed themselves in prison, and [the Prison and Probation Ombudsman has warned of the role of the IPP sentence in suicides.](https://www.ppo.gov.uk/blog/investigating-the-deaths-of-ipp-prisoners/)