



NATIONALITY AND BORDERS BILL

The Nationality and Borders Bill passed through the House of Commons in December and moved to the House of Lords. It had its second reading in the House of Lords on Wednesday, 5th January.

Since it first appeared, there has been widespread concern over aspects of the Bill that show a lack of respect for international law and for the dignity and rights of each person made in God's image. The [speeches](#) in the House of Lords reflected this: numerous members raised objections to the Bill's more problematic measures, and it is clear that there will be some serious amendments proposed.

The Bishop of Durham ended his speech:

The Bill should be an opportunity to create a fair, compassionate and effective asylum system that works for the taxpayer, communities and those seeking asylum. Sadly, on many counts I fear that it does not work. We on these Benches will work with others to propose a range of amendments. I fear that the Bill fails the Home Office's own values; it certainly fails to uphold the UN Convention on Refugees and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Together with Refugees coalition, of which Christian Concern for One World is a member, is has focused on asking parliamentarians to make two key changes:

- 1) the removal of clause 11, which would allow the Home Office to treat refugees differently on the basis of how they arrived in the UK, and
- 2) the introduction of a target of resettling 10,000 people annually. This would include the places available from the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, but also enable people from other countries to have access to safe routes.

In addition, we share with many others concerns about:

- the impacts of the Bill (especially Part 5) on efforts to end modern slavery and to help those who have been enslaved, and
(for more information, see [this analysis](#) from the Rights Lab at the University of Nottingham; [this letter](#) from charities dealing with modern slavery; and [this response](#) from the UK's Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner)
- Clause 9 of the Bill, which gives Government the power to deprive people of their citizenship without first giving them notice.

The Nationality and Borders Bill will go to Committee Stage on 27th January, at which point the members of the House of Lords will have the chance to debate proposed amendments and request responses from the Government. It will then be voted on during the Report Stage, which will most likely take place in March.

FOR PRAYER

Please join in praying throughout this month:

- for members of the House of Lords and their staffs as they work on amendments to the Nationality and Borders Bill
- that the Bill will be amended in ways which remove its most problematic proposals and help to create a "fairer, more compassionate and more effective asylum system"

FOR ACTION

- Find out more! Read the [Together with Refugees Parliamentary Briefing](#).
- Help other people get involved! You can use this [CCOW leaflet](#) - easy to distribute at church and meetings.
- Prepare to lobby your MP - we'll be sending out materials you can use. Lobbying during February would be ideal.