



Chris Heaton-Harris
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October 2020

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about immigration detention.

It is only right that every case is considered individually and kept under constant review. I know my constituents would expect nothing less. I would like to assure you that there is a general presumption of liberty for all and if detention is used as circumstances change, detention is reviewed, and release may then be the appropriate response.

The Government is committed to using immigration detention sparingly and only when necessary. Indefinite detention is not permitted in UK law. In order for the detention of an individual to be lawful, there must be a realistic prospect of their removal within a reasonable timescale. The Government is held to account on this by the courts, and by a series of safeguards that ensure proper scrutiny of decisions to detain and on-going detention.

In my view, a time limit is not only unnecessary, but it would also severely limit the Government's ability to use detention as an effective means of maintaining lawful immigration control. I have been advised that any time limit would encourage those who seek to frustrate the removal process to run down the clock until the time limit is reached and release is guaranteed, regardless of the proximity of removal and the facts of the case.

I was very concerned to discover that if there was a 28-day limit to immigration detention in place in December 2019, over 100 rapists, murderers, and child sex offenders awaiting deportation would have been released.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY

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