

HOW TO DEFEAT THE LEADBEATER BILL: *A guide to lobbying your MP in person*

FEBRUARY 2025

On 29th November 2024, MPs voted by 330 to 275 to give Kim Leadbeater MP's the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill a second reading.

The Bill is now receiving line by line scrutiny by a Committee of MPs. This will be followed by Report stage, with MPs given another chance to vote at Third Reading. This will likely take place in late April.

While the result in November was disappointing, **the fight is far from over**. Many MPs have already said that they could change their vote if they are not satisfied with the details of this Bill. **We need just 30 MPs to change their vote to defeat the Bill. We must now lobby MPs to reject the Bill at Third Reading.**

Writing to MPs is important, but we need people to go a step further and go and see their MPs in person. This briefing gives guidance on how to lobby your MP in person on this issue.

WHY LOBBY MPS IN PERSON?

We only have a short amount of time to defeat this Bill. We need to do all we can to persuade MPs to vote it down. Going to see your MP in person is probably the most impactful campaign action one can take. It is a guaranteed way of engaging directly with your MP. Personal engagement is always the most powerful form of communication. We know that MPs are often convinced to back a particular campaign through being moved by a constituent's story. Our side of the debate needs to be doing this more.

HOW DO I ARRANGE A MEETING WITH MY MP?

Most MPs have their own websites where you can find contact information and details on how they engage with constituents.

The best place to meet your MP is either at their constituency office or at one of their advice surgeries. Most MPs hold at least one of these a month and they are often in places such as local libraries. Fridays are often the best day to meet with your MP, as the House of Commons is not usually sitting, and MPs spend it in their constituencies. They will also spend more time in their constituencies during Parliamentary recesses (which are roughly the same as school holidays). If you are in reach of London, they may agree to meet you in the Houses of Parliament.



You may have to contact your MP's office to find out when they hold surgeries for constituents, because of security concerns about making this information publicly available.

SHOULD I GO WITH A GROUP TO MEET MY MP?

If possible, go to meet your MP with other members of your SPUC branch or other people who oppose assisted suicide. On this topic, it might be especially helpful to go with someone with related expertise, such as a doctor or care worker. MPs will also be glad to hear from faith or community leaders. Ask your MP how many people can be accommodated at the meeting. Be respectful of any security concerns they may have over seeing large groups.

HOW DO I PREPARE FOR MY MEETING?

Plan what points you want to make before your meeting. If you are going in a group, it is wise to plan who is going to make which points.

You can use the accompanying briefing on this Bill to help you. You should also keep up with developments on this Bill, such as the progress of the Committee examining it. Check the SPUC website for recent news stories.

Do as much research as you can about your MP on this subject. Which way did they vote at the Second Reading on 29th November 2024? How strong was their support or opposition? Did they express any reservations about the Bill? Call the SPUC office on 020 7091 7091 if you need any help with this.

WHAT SHOULD I TALK ABOUT IN THE MEETING?

At this stage, it is best to raise specific concerns about this particular Bill, not just general arguments against assisted suicide. Our briefings can help you, but it is most important that MPs hear YOUR concerns. What most worries you about this Bill? Who in your life do you think would be endangered by it?

Use your own stories and experiences. These could include personal experience of illness, depression or disability, caring for a dying person, or someone with disabilities, or professional experience, such as a carer.

WHAT IF MY MP VOTED FOR ASSISTED SUICIDE? ISN'T IT POINTLESS TO LOBBY THEM?

If your MP voted for the Leadbeater Bill at Second Reading, it is especially important that you go and see him/her. A majority of MPs were present for the vote, **so in order to win this, we need MPs to change their vote.** While an MP may not completely change their view on assisted suicide in the space of a few months, it is entirely possible for them to vote differently at Third Reading to how they did in November on this Bill. Indeed, even during the Second Reading debate, MPs said they would change their vote if they weren't satisfied with the safeguards, or if particular changes weren't made.

Focus on concerns about this Bill. What makes it particularly dangerous? What provisions in it worry you?

WHAT IF MY MP VOTED AGAINST THE BILL?

That's great! We need MPs who voted the wrong way to change their vote, but we also need to keep the 275 MPs who voted against it on our side. They will be being lobbied by the other side, so tell them how much you appreciate them voting against assisted suicide. Do all you can to strengthen their resolve. Even those who are very strongly against it will appreciate your lobbying, as it will enable them to say in the next debate that they have heard from constituents.

WHAT IF MY MP IS PRO-ABORTION?

Do not make any assumptions on assisted suicide based on how your MP votes on abortion. For most MPs, they are very separate issues, and many MPs who are pro-abortion are against assisted suicide (and even a few vice versa). For instance, 147 Labour MPs voted against the Leadbeater Bill at Second Reading. In the last Parliament, less than five Labour MPs reliably voted against measures to extend abortion.

Unless you are sure your MP is pro-life on abortion, it would be prudent not to bring the subject up when lobbying an MP on this assisted suicide Bill.

DOES IT MATTER WHAT POLITICAL PARTY MY MP IS IN?

Your concerns with the Bill, and your own personal stories or experience, will be the same whatever party your MP is in. However, it is worth considering your MP's political views more broadly when preparing for the meeting. For example, if your MP is Labour, criticising the Government, Kim Leadbeater, or the Prime Minister is not likely to be fruitful. But focusing on the threat to the vulnerable or minority groups might well be.

DO YOU HAVE ANY MORE TIPS TO MAKE THE MEETING A SUCCESS?

- Be as polite and respectful as possible. It is very disappointing that so many MPs voted for this assisted suicide Bill at Second Reading, but in order to defeat this we need to keep up a constructive relationship with MPs who voted the wrong way.
- Thank them for their time, and, if you can, thank them for one other piece of work they have done that you approve of, such as a local issue. Showing appreciation will get the meeting off to a positive start and help build a rapport.
- Don't be nervous! You will almost certainly know more about the issue than your MP does.

Please let us know how your meeting goes! Send a report into:
political@spuc.org.uk

EVERY LIFE IS WORTH LIVING

Every vote against assisted suicide matters
because every life matters.



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