

Government failing to address staffing crisis, Greens warn ahead of NHS rally



18 January 2022

The Health and Care Bill ignores a staffing crisis which has left both NHS and care staff on their knees and fails to address social inequality and long waiting lists, the Green Party has warned ahead of an online SOS NHS rally tomorrow [Wednesday 19 January]. [1]

The Greens have also accused the government of missing a vital opportunity to integrate health and social care in the bill, which fails to tackle the issues surrounding social care despite being in the bill's name.

Green party Co-leader, Carla Denyer, said:

"The Health and Care Bill fails to address the severe staff shortages and low morale that our health and care services face – a crisis intensified by both Covid and Brexit. NHS and social care workers say they are on their knees and there are inadequate numbers of new staff being trained. All of which leaves millions of patients on very long waiting lists, many of whom have urgent health and care needs.

"This Bill was an opportunity to genuinely integrate health and social care. It fails to do so. Indeed, social care is not tackled at all in the bill despite it being in the title.

"The government is also failing to address the huge health inequalities which have been exposed by Covid. We need a Bill that makes local and national government responsible for eliminating health inequalities and provides the resources to do so, together with a broader set of national policies to address widening social inequalities such as a wealth tax, a citizen's income and a Green New Deal to ensure everyone has a warm home."

SOS NHS, a coalition of campaign groups and trade unions demanding emergency funding for the NHS, will hold an online rally tomorrow, Wednesday, at 7pm.

Notes

1. HNS Confederation overview of the Health and Care

Bill: <https://www.nhsconfed.org/publications/health-and-care-bill>

2. The SOS NHS online rally will take place at 7pm on Wednesday 19th January
<https://sosnhs.org/events/>

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Lords likely to vote down draconian protest clauses in Policing Bill after Green campaign



14 January 2022

Green Party peers have welcomed an announcement by the Labour Lords that they will finally pledge to reject most of the 18 pages of Government amendments to the Police, Crime and Sentencing Bill which would effectively criminalise protest on Monday [1].

Following a campaign by Green parliamentarians, elected representatives and members to defend the right to effective protest [2], the move means that the Greens, Labour, the Liberal Democrats and some independents will have enough votes to defeat the government.

This will force Government ministers to either drop the proposals or bring them back in completely separate legislation at a later date, if they choose.

The Lords only have this power on very rare occasions. In this case because the Government introduced the amendments late and by-passed scrutiny in the Commons.

These Government amendments would give the police the power to stop people attending demonstrations who have no criminal conviction, and to stop and search without suspicion.

Green Party peer, Baroness Jenny Jones said:

“This is crunch time for opposition to this increasingly authoritarian Government. We welcome the Labour Party’s decision to support us and others in opposing the majority of these repressive laws. There is every chance that we can strike a blow for civil liberties and defend democratic rights in this country. This will be a huge victory for green campaigners.

“These are Belarus-style laws, but the Lords can stop them if we can motivate enough peers to stay with us during Monday’s late night sitting and vote for basic democratic values. It’s no way to run a country, but a lot will come down to stamina and I’m bringing my sleeping bag.”

ENDS

Notes

<https://twitter.com/LabourLordsUK/status/1481958957392568321>

2

<https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2022/01/12/green-parliamentarians-call-on-labour-to-%E2%80%9Cstand-up-against-this-government%E2%80%9D-over-right-to-protest/>

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Green Party peers Jenny Jones and Natalie Bennett are both available for interview – for more information or to arrange an interview please contact press@greenparty.org.uk or call 0203 691 9401

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[Greens demand emergency insulation for homes most at risk from fuel poverty](#)



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[Green Party calls for police to take over Partygate investigation](#)



13 January 2022

- **Jenny Jones: “This is clearly a matter for the police”**
- **Carla Denyer: “Police should be doing their job without fear or favour”**

The Green Party has called for the police to take over the investigation into Partygate. The call follows Green peer Jenny Jones’s latest letter to the Met Police Commissioner questioning their failure to investigate the breach of

lockdown. [1]

Green Party peer Jenny Jones said, "Since Boris Johnson's admission of a party at 10 Downing Street, this has clearly become a matter for the police, not an internal inquiry to be carried out by a colleague of the people who attended these gatherings. Sue Gray may be independent minded but this is not an independent inquiry. Her inquiry is owned by the Prime Minister and she has to check its publication with him. Given that civil servants have a duty not to embarrass the Prime Minister, I think it would be best if all her evidence is handed over to the Met Police and that they dig out the CCTV recordings of the garden party that their officers have sat on."

Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer said, "There's little reason to believe that Boris Johnson will take seriously an inquiry being led by a civil servant who is ultimately answerable to himself. Government ministers must not be allowed to consider themselves above the law. The Prime Minister's alleged breaking of lockdown rules must be taken up by the appropriate body – the police – who should be doing their job without fear or favour."

Notes

1 <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/downing-street-party-met-police-witness-b1991716.html>

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Green parliamentarians call on Labour to "stand up against this government" over right to protest



12 January 2022

Green Party parliamentarians, elected representatives and members gathered outside Parliament today [Wednesday] to protest the draconian measures in the Policing Bill and urge Labour to join them in standing up against the government.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill has reached the House of Lords this week, where crucial votes will be held to defend the right to effective protest, culminating in a decisive vote on Monday [17 January].

The Green Party has called on Labour and independent members of the House of Lords to stand up for the right to take part in peaceful protest, which they

say will be removed by the Bill.

Dozens of Green Party members and representatives attended the Covid-safe protest outside Parliament today to hear speeches from parliamentarians Caroline Lucas, Jenny Jones and Natalie Bennett and London Assembly member Zack Polanski.

Baroness Jenny Jones said:

"It's not easy to change legislation, but here we really can make a difference. The problem we have is that Labour is not onside, it is dithering.

"So what we are trying to do is get national Labour, Yvette Cooper and Kier Starmer, to understand that these measures suppress genuine dissent with the government. It's a Belarus-style move by our horrible government.

"We can stop it if Labour is onside."

Baroness Natalie Bennett said:

"If we don't have protest, we will have even worse government and council policies than we have now.

"Jenny has set out how we have a real opportunity in the House of Lords. It's all down to the Labour peers, that they stand up against the government, stand up for rights that so many Labour people over more than a century have actually used and have been essential to get rights for working people.

"We have a message to Labour, you have to stand up against this government, you can stop these dreadful amendments now, you've got to do it."

Caroline Lucas MP said:

"Priti Patel has said that she intends to use the Bill to criminalise people taking part in climate-related protests. But the sweeping powers of this Bill could be used against anyone who falls foul of what the home secretary decides is acceptable.

"The threat to democracy goes way beyond party politics, and we are calling on MPs of all parties and members of the House of Lords to stand up for human rights and reject this extremely dangerous and anti-democratic Bill. Whatever the home secretary believes, protest is a fundamental right in our democracy, not a crime. It must be protected."

Zack Polanski AM said:

"These are not acts of a government that think they're in charge. This is an act of a government who think they're cornered, that the power of the people is coming and they know that we have the ethical and moral responsibility and duty on our side.

"And we are challenging them and it's working because they are hearing. We

need to keep this up, Labour need to join us, hear the call loud, hear it clear, because we're here and we're not going away."

Notes

1

Photos and footage of the event are available from the Green Party press office: press@greenparty.org.uk / 0203 691 9401

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