

Lucy Frazer
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Media Bill: The urgent need for cost protections for journalists and publishers

Dear Lucy Frazer,

I am writing to you following your recent comments on the Media Bill and the proposed repeal of Section 40 of the Crime and Courts Act. In a press release published on the Government website, it is claimed that the Media Bill has 'media freedom at its core' with the repeal of Section 40 at the centre of this claim.

However, given Section 40 has never been enacted, repealing it does nothing to improve media freedoms. Rather it removes any potential cost protection for the 200+ news brands that have voluntarily signed up to recognised self-regulation and leaves all publishers as vulnerable to the spectre of SLAPPs and other pernicious legal threats used by the powerful to stifle necessary public interest journalism as they have been for decades.

While we recognise that the Government has introduced a new law to give the courts powers to deal with SLAPPs relating to economic crime, it is abundantly clear that new legislation that provides robust cost protections across the board is still needed.

We therefore ask that the Government act quickly to introduce measures that actually protects the freedoms of publishers and allows them to hold power to account in the public interest.

Yours sincerely,



Lexie Kirkconnell-Kawana
CEO, Impress