

DANIEL KAWCZYNSKI MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

12 April 2023

Dear Constituent

Public Order Bill – Stop and Search

Thank you for contacting me about stop and search and public order. The new stop and search powers contained in the Public Order Bill seek to enable the police to proactively tackle highly disruptive protest offences by searching for and seizing items which are made, adapted, or intended to be used in connection with protest-related offences. In their 2021 report on the policing of protests, His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services agreed that such powers would have an operational benefit to police.

The Bill provides for both a suspicion-led power, amending section 1 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, and a suspicion-less power. Suspicion-led stop and search is where a police officer suspects that a person is carrying an object that they intend to use in connection with a protest-related offence. When the suspicion-less stop and search power has been authorised, it will allow a constable to conduct a stop and search without the need for suspicion.

The suspicion-less stop and search power uses a similar framework to that found within section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 to ensure consistency in terms of police powers and safeguards. There has to be a balance between deploying tactics to help fight crime and ensuring no one feels unduly threatened. However, I want to be clear, no one should be targeted because of their race.

A number of improvements to stop and search data collection in the last year have also allowed for more in-depth insight and analysis. For the first time, in the year ending March 2021, the Home Office collected record-level information on stop and search, meaning a single stop and search can be followed through to the outcome, with much richer data about who was stopped and searched (for example, age, gender and ethnicity information for each record). This is part of an ongoing programme of work to improve the clarity and context of stop and search data and to better understand the disparities in stop and search rates.

I am confident these new changes to public order law will put a stop to the relentless reoffending and significant disruption caused by a selfish minority of protesters which impinge on the rights of the British public to go about their daily lives in peace.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'DK', followed by a horizontal line.

Daniel Kawczynski MP
Member of Parliament for Shrewsbury & Atcham