



Ministry
of Justice

Chris Philp MP
Parliamentary Under-
Secretary of State

Rt Hon Sir Desmond Swayne TD MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

06 April 2020

Dear Sir Desmond,

PRISONERS (DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION ABOUT VICTIMS) BILL

I am writing to notify of amendments made to the entry in Hansard for the debate at Committee stage of the Prisoners (Disclosure of Information about Victims) Bill held on 3 March. The paragraph has been amended as follows:

There are two substantive clauses in this Bill. Clause 1 relates to life sentences handed down for murder, manslaughter or indecent images. It is worth mentioning, in response to my right hon. Friend's intervention, that amendment 1 adds into the provisions of this Bill sentences of imprisonment for public protection, which can also be handed down for making indecent images. Clause 2 covers the slightly broader type of sentence—namely, extended determinate sentences, whether they are handed down for manslaughter or the failure to disclose the subject of an indecent image. He is quite right to point out that in cases where there has been a failure to disclose the victim of an indecent image, there will now be an extended determinate sentence rather than a life sentence as the maximum penalty for that offence is ten years imprisonment. However, in the case of Vanessa George, the sentence handed down was a sentence of imprisonment for public protection (an IPP sentence) which have now been abolished so that would have been caught by clause 1 rather than by clause 2.

The changes were made to clarify that in the case of Vanessa George, the sentence handed down was a sentence of imprisonment for public protection (the IPP sentence), rather than an extended determinate sentence, as she was convicted and sentenced in 2009. The IPP sentence was abolished in 2012 and since then has no longer been an available disposal for the indecent images offence at which the Bill is aimed.

The offence of taking or making indecent images of children currently carries a maximum penalty of ten years imprisonment and those convicted of the offence can currently be given either a standard determinate sentence or an extended determinate sentence depending on the circumstances of the case.

I am placing a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

CHRIS PHILP MP