



THE RT. HON. SIR ALAN HASELHURST, M.P.
Member of Parliament for Saffron Walden

House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

25th January, 2012

Councillor Alan Dean,
49 Recreation Ground,
Stansted,
Essex CM24 8BD

Dear Alan,

Thank you for your email of 23rd January about the Recall of Elected Representatives Bill. The Private Member's Bill on this subject has indeed run its course without obtaining its Second Reading.

I must tell you that I make it a practice not to sign EDMs of any description. They are a greatly devalued form of parliamentary currency and have virtually zero effect. I cannot tell whether the Recall of Elected Representatives Bill will resurface in the next Session of Parliament. It depends on whether one of the Members lucky in the ballot for Private Member's Bills chooses that subject. However, as you acknowledge, the Government itself intends to legislate.

I accept the principle of a power of recall, but I do not believe that, outside palpable and serious offences, an MP's freedom of speech should be compromised by being subject to the threat of recall at the instigation of a minority of constituents who are opposed to him. Public opinion ebbs and flows and that is why there is basic soundness in our system which allows people to send someone to Westminster to represent them in a general sense. It follows that no MP can satisfy every single one of his constituents on every subject, but, if he is to be thrown out mid-term, it ought not to be on the basis of his opinion on one subject. I can perfectly well see that there could be exceptions, not least if a Member changes parties, but that should be a matter for the debate and it will be debated.

Yours sincerely,
