



Chris Heaton-Harris
Member of Parliament for Daventry
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
Tel: 020 7219 7048

July 2021

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about the Elections Bill and joint campaigning.

Our democracy is admired around the world for its values that have been upheld for generations. I recognise the importance of ensuring that those values are robustly defended.

That is why the Elections Bill will put British citizens' participation at the heart of democracy and support voters in making free and informed choices at elections. Measures will address postal vote harvesting, introduce digital imprints, as well as require a photographic ID before voting at a General Election – a requirement in Northern Ireland since 2003.

I understand concerns about civil society organisations being prevented from adding their voice to the debate but let me assure you that this would not be the case. I recognise the important role CSOs play in providing valuable information on a variety of policies. The Bill instead aims to make elections fairer and more transparent by requiring greater transparency from campaigners.

Clauses 24 of the Bill, for instance, would require third party campaigns to give notice to the Electoral Commission at a lower level of expenditure that is currently required. Clause 25 would require campaign spending, which is part of a joint plan between a registered party and a third party or parties, to be counted as part of the spending limits of all parties involved.

I believe that joint campaigning has an important role to play in our electoral system, but it should be transparently and fairly regulated particularly when it could be regarded as intending to achieve a common purpose.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY