

The Rt Hon. Stephen Barclay, MP  
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

Dear Secretary of State,

30th January 2023

### **Call for Public Space Ventilation Bill**

SARS-CoV-2 is still killing, disabling and damaging unacceptable numbers of people in the UK and globally. But the science is clear: airborne transmission is preventable through ventilation, filtration and sterilisation.

Everyone deserves the human right to be kept safe from airborne pathogens. It is vital that the UK Government passes a Public Space Ventilation Bill, or that airborne pathogens are specifically named as a biogenic pollutant in Schedule 2 of the Clean Air (Human Rights) Bill 2022-23. In every public space, especially vulnerable communities and high risk environments such as schools, health and social care settings, we urgently need:

- Visible CO<sub>2</sub> monitors
- A regulated max CO<sub>2</sub> level of 800ppm
- Immediate upgrading of ventilation and air filtration
- Government ventilation grants for indoor public spaces
- An open access online monitoring system with a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) score

Like the founding of the UK's sewerage system 150 years ago, this legislation would be a historic step forward for public health. We already have the knowledge and technology. This would protect people from new and existing Covid strains, influenza, Strep A, RSV, future airborne pandemics, alongside the toxic airborne particles such as VOCs, allergens and mould already named in the bill. It would have an exceptional positive and cost-effective effect on health, education and productivity.

The [Clean Air \(Human Rights\) Bill](#), (aka [Ella's Law](#)) currently passing through Parliament, was introduced to "establish a human right to clean air and would require the government to limit the concentration of pollutants in the air in accordance with World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines and scientific evidence" ([House of Lords Research briefing](#)). The current draft specifies only mould and damp, not airborne pathogens. We therefore urge you to build on the momentum of this Bill to include what the WHO, and a large body of scientific evidence, considers to be airborne pathogens capable of serious harm to health, that can be removed through ventilation and air purification systems. This is consistent and indeed necessary to fulfil the principles of prevention, precaution and sustainability in Section 20 of the draft bill.

This is an opportunity to create jobs and an industry whilst relieving pressure on the NHS, social care, education, benefits system and employers. The resulting reduced costs would compensate for the investment in this world leading project. A Royal Academy of Engineering [report](#) commissioned by the Government's Chief Scientific Officer, Sir Patrick Vallance, calculated that failure to act on indoor infection control could cost the UK £1.3 trillion over the next 60 years. The key prioritisation is clearly affirmed "It is critical to improve the infection resilience of the UK's built environment and transportation systems." Can we afford not to do this?

The [UK Government](#) knows this can and should be done. It is rolling out state of the art ventilation and filtration to prevent airborne transmission in Parliament and selected government buildings. The [World Economic Forum](#) in Davos 2023 had exceptional Covid mitigations including HEPA air filtration and UVGI/Far UVC. Chief Medical Officer Sir Chris Whitty asserts that "Engineering interventions, such as effective ventilation indoors, can help to

reduce transmission of many infections in places of work, study, at home, and on public transport.” We believe everyone deserves the same human right to clean air, not just those in power.

Many countries are regulating and instigating Clean Air policies involving ventilation and filtration, including [Belgium](#), [France](#), [Latvia](#), [New Zealand](#), [Italy](#), [USA](#) and [Australia](#). The UK Government needs to do the same.

The question of our time is how do we end the pandemic? History, writes MIT nuclear engineer Charles Forsberg, “shows that most diseases are stopped by shutting down disease transmission...the most enduring way to stop transmission is via engineered health systems.” The answer is simple: we must clean the air. It works on many pathogens and variants and maintains our right to health and our freedoms. We only have to take that step. Please help us to help everyone.

**We would like to arrange a meeting with your team to discuss this at your earliest convenience**

Yours sincerely

Long Covid Support

Long Covid Advocacy

Long Covid Kids

Long Covid SOS

Corsi Rosenthal Foundation

Covid Aid

Covid Bereaved Families for Justice

Hazards Campaign

Airborne Allergy Action

Long Covid Doctors for Action

Clean Air Classrooms

Long Covid Nurses and Midwives UK

Long COVID Physio

Long Covid Scotland

Clinically Vulnerable Families

Long Covid Work

Occupational Therapy for Long Covid

The UK Mastocytosis Support Group

SAPHNA School & Public Health Nurses Association

PANS PANDAS UK

Covid Action

CAPA (Covid Airborne Protection Alliance) members of which are:

-ARTP - Association for Respiratory Technology & Physiology

-BAPEN - British Association for Parenteral & Enteral Nutrition

-BIASP - British Association of Stroke Physicians

-BDA - British Dietetic Association

-BOHS - British Occupational Health Society

-BSG - British Society of Gastroenterology

-College of Paramedics

-CSP - Chartered Society of Physiotherapists

-FreshAir NHS

-HCSA - Hospital Consultants & Specialists Association

-MSDUK - Med Supply Drive UK

-NNNG - National Nurses Nutrition Group

-QNI - Queen’s Nursing Institute

-RCSLT - Royal College of Speech & Language Therapists

-Doctor’s Association UK