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| |  | | --- | | **[Calling all campaigners:](https://smk.us1.list-manage.com/track/click?u=98742a91dc25f3c3bdc5afaad&id=6462ba543b&e=69488ec4d1" \t "_blank)**[**protect your right to protest**](https://smk.us1.list-manage.com/track/click?u=98742a91dc25f3c3bdc5afaad&id=10deda7323&e=69488ec4d1)  The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill (known as the Police Bill) enters the House of Lords in mid-September. The sections that restrict protest and criminalise trespass were left untouched during its passage though the Commons, despite widespread criticism from the public and experts. It’s time to urge the Government to rethink its approach. [Will your organisation join us in signing this letter?](https://smk.us1.list-manage.com/track/click?u=98742a91dc25f3c3bdc5afaad&id=a7ce032c28&e=69488ec4d1) There is just over a week left to add your support.   For centuries, protest has been used by activists and campaigners to press for change through nonviolent methods. The Police Bill would allow ‘disruptive’ protests to be banned, striking at the heart of our right to freedom of assembly. The definition of 'disruption' is so vague that it could cover almost any protest.   The Police Bill slaps massive fines and jail sentences on the organisers and attendees of protests who stray from conditions. A nurse who organised a protest about the 1% pay rise recently was fined £10,000. Under this Bill, she might have been fined more and been jailed for 11 months. People who damage memorials could spend up to 10 years in prison. The Bill also restricts people's ability to protest outside Parliament, where people's voices can be heard by those in power.   Democracy goes beyond the ballot box. Public debate, which includes campaigning and protest, is vital to its health. We believe this now an urgent issue and yet another example of civic space being squeezed.   Liberty, Bond, Friends Families and Travellers, Quakers in Britain and Friends of the Earth are coordinating a joint letter to the Home Secretary and Secretary of State for Justice.   They want the widest possible sign-up, across sectors, and will publish the letter in September as the Lords begin debating the Bill. We hope your organisation (via someone at senior level) will join us by [signing the open letter](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfABq2j_9QF_OlpRzHPVfTnAR60HLPrhu3SeP5Wj714ymXf-Q/viewform). [**The letter will be available to sign until 31 August.**](https://smk.us1.list-manage.com/track/click?u=98742a91dc25f3c3bdc5afaad&id=03a1a499fc&e=69488ec4d1) | |