

Landmark climate bill to be debated today as Labour MPs vow to defy whips

****IMAGES FROM WESTMINSTER DEMO THIS MORNING AVAILABLE [HERE](#)****

KEIR STARMER faces a backbench rebellion in the Commons today [Friday] ahead of a crucial vote on the Climate and Nature Bill.

TV chef Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall and broadcaster Dr George McGavin were among those [issuing a last-minute plea](#) to MPs outside Parliament this morning.

At least 42 Labour MPs say they intend to vote in favour of the private members' bill, in defiance of Government whips' orders.

Some Labour backbenchers report being threatened with removal of the party whip if they back the Bill.

Meanwhile, Government loyalists have been ordered back to Westminster to make long speeches in a bid to talk out the Bill and avoid a vote.

Environmental campaigners were joined by a [giant Keir Starmer caricature and oversized bill](#) outside Parliament this morning, in a last-minute bid to secure support from MPs.

Climate activists Tori Tsui and Dominique Palmer also joined the demonstrators.

The private members bill is [supported by more than 190 MPs](#) and is being spearheaded by Lib Dem MP Roz Savage.

Clive Lewis, Labour MP for Norwich South, told [The Guardian](#) last night he would vote for the bill come what may:

"I'm hoping the government and the climate and nature bill sponsors can come to an agreement [that] will be good for Labour at a time when many people feel like we are backtracking on our climate and nature commitments. This will send a strong signal that we are still focused on them and that we see a sustainable economy as the only future."

Campaigners say the numbers "sit on a knife edge" ahead of today's debate, which begins at 09:30.

****MP CO-SPONSORS AND LEAD CAMPAIGNERS AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEWS TODAY DTL / IN WESTMINSTER****

Contact Patrick O'Donnell on 07816 892788 to arrange.

Sample quotes

Celebrity chef and Climate and Nature Bill supporter, Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, said:

“The Climate and Nature Bill - which our planet desperately requires - sets out a bold, joined-up plan to boost Britain’s transition to net zero and protect nature.

“Every single MP has a simple decision to make today - back the climate and nature, or side with Trump and the climate deniers.

“It is time for the Government to put its money where its mouth is. They claim they are already taking action, but siloed working and piecemeal changes are simply not good enough to achieve net zero and the protection of nature they promised us before the election.

Co-director of environmental campaign group [Zero Hour](#), Dr Amy McDonnell, said:

“Labour MPs are understandably absolutely furious with those ordering them to pull their support for the Climate and Nature Bill at the eleventh hour. Their constituents will no doubt share this anger too.

“The cross-party proposals to tackle the dual climate and nature crisis are overwhelmingly backed by the public. However, this vote is on a knife edge and the Government is clearly running scared.

“Ministers ought to take every opportunity they have to find a way forward and back the Bill.”

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Zero Hour

- [Zero Hour](#) advocates for the Climate and Nature Bill. It aims to achieve the UK's international climate and nature obligations through an integrated approach.
- The CAN Bill was first developed with members of the successful ‘Big Ask’ campaign, which led to the Climate Change Act 2008, and is now led by a coalition of UK campaigners, world-leading scientists, major NGOs and members of the public.
- The Bill was first introduced to Parliament in September 2020. It was introduced in the House of Lords in June 2022, and then in the House of Commons in May 2023, and March 2024.

About the Climate and Nature Bill

- The [Climate and Nature Bill](#) is guaranteed a five-hour Commons debate during its second reading on 24 January 2025, and is sponsored by Liberal Democrat MP, Dr Roz Savage MBE.
- The ‘CAN’ Bill is backed by over 250 Parliamentarians, including Ed Davey, Carla Denyer and Zac Goldsmith.
- It enjoys the support of 55,000 members of the public; over 1,100 businesses, NGOs and charities; 1,200 [climate scientists](#) and health experts; and representatives of all main faiths.
- High-profile endorsers include [The Co-operative Bank](#), Patagonia, The W.I., Save British Farming, [The National Trust](#), Arup, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, [Ecotricity](#), The Wildlife Trusts, Ecosia and Triodos Bank.