

Template letter to send to your MP

You can **download and use the template letter/email on the next page** to ask your MP to raise a question in the House of Commons about the courts' use of unregistered interpreters.

In order to edit the document once you have downloaded it, simply select all the text by holding down the "Ctrl" key and pressing the letter "A" on your keyboard ("Cmd" + "A" on a Mac). You can then cut and paste the text into a Word or .txt document, or directly into the body of your email.

It should be possible for you to do this using the free-to-download standard version of the Adobe Acrobat Reader software most commonly used to view PDFs.

To find the contact details of your MP, visit:

<https://members.parliament.uk/members/Commons>.

We would be interested to know which MPs are contacted for future reference as part of our ongoing lobbying activities. So please do let us know if you make use of the letter and the name of your MP by emailing mike@nrpsi.org.uk.

We would also be delighted to hear about any response you receive to your letter. If you are happy to share this, please email a copy to mike@nrpsi.org.uk.

Dear _____,

I am a professional interpreter who specialises in working for the public services because I believe in helping people to access these vital services and public sector professionals to do their jobs.

I chose to become registered with and regulated by the [National Register of Public Service Interpreters \(NRPSI\)](#), meaning that my credentials have been independently verified by the profession's voluntary Regulator and that I adhere to its Code of Professional Conduct, because I believe in professional standards.

I'm sure, as a Member of Parliament, you understand all too well the need for recognised professional standards and an independent and transparent means of holding those who fail them to account.

You will, therefore, appreciate how dismayed I was to hear recent news reports (in [The Independent](#) and [Evening Standard](#)) about 'fake interpreters' being used in court.

How can this be allowed to happen in a modern United Kingdom? How can public trust and safety, not to mention the integrity and reputation of our justice system, be jeopardised in this way?

More specifically, and this is the question I would like you to raise in the House of Commons: How can the courts be allowed to persist in using unregistered interpreters when a register of vetted public service interpreting professionals exists and can be accessed online for free by anyone wishing to engage their services or check their professional details and identity?

As NRPSI has publicly stated, while a horrifying turn of events, this case of 'fake interpreters' being used in court is not a shock to professional registered interpreters. We have witnessed firsthand the decline in standards of court interpreting that has been promoted by changes in how court interpreters are sourced by the justice sector.

NRPSI has been campaigning for some time for the Ministry of Justice and the language agencies that fulfil its language service contracts not to put short-term cost-savings before public trust and safety.

NRPSI has called on them not to lower interpreting engagement fees to unsustainable levels and accept language speakers with no interpreting qualifications for certain types of assignment. Such actions deter the best qualified and experienced interpreters from working with the justice sector. This is impacting the quality of language services available to the justice system, exposing it to the likes of 'fake interpreters'.

This situation can be turned around if steps are taken to ensure that only properly remunerated registered and regulated interpreters are used by the public services, the courts in particular.

NRPSI is in an ongoing dialogue with the MoJ about the independent balances and checks that need to be in place to ensure the quality of the language services provision to the justice sector. It understands the complexities of the MoJ's language service requirements and is keen to work with it to ensure the interpreters it uses are appropriately qualified and experienced, registered and accountable.

NRPSI also believes that the public interest is best served by a professional code and complaints system that is managed by the independent Regulator. NRPSI's disciplinary procedures and processes are and always will be transparent.

Given that NRPSI already exists and was established 27 years ago with government support to protect the public and criminal justice system from unqualified and incompetent interpreters, I ask again, how can the courts be allowed to persist in using unregistered interpreters?

I hope you are able to raise a question on this in the House of Commons.

I am keen to hear about any responses and your views on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Contact details:
