Dear **[MP’s name]**

I am your constituent and I’m writing to you about the Domestic Abuse Bill that is going through Parliament at the moment.

I believe that the Domestic Abuse Bill is a real opportunity to improve protections for women suffering domestic abuse and that we must make it as effective as possible. **[I work closely with survivors of domestic abuse (if you work for a domestic abuse service) or I am myself a survivor / relative of a survivor of domestic abuse explain any personal link]**

I particularly want to draw your attention to the need for a new criminal offence of non-fatal strangulation. I am writing to ask if you will support this and write to the Ministry of Justice Minister Alex Chalk to tell him of your support.

Strangulation is very common and should be a red flag in domestic abuse cases. It is often used as a tool of power and control, but the risk of death is also 7 times higher for women who experience it. It is terrifying and can cause long term psychological and physical damage, including miscarriage, mild brain damage and neurological problems.

Non-fatal strangulation is unusual because it is a very serious assault yet often leaves no, or very few, visible marks.

The law as it stands currently is inadequate.

Perpetrators, if charged, are most often charged with common assault, which is equivalent to a slap, and does not reflect the seriousness of the offence. Perpetrators are often not charged at all because the assault is not taken seriously and/or the 6-month deadline for charging common assault has passed. This means perpetrators are not held accountable and a strong risk indicator of escalating violence is missed, whilst victims of very serious violence do not get justice.

The experience of other countries, including Australia, New Zealand and the US, shows that a stand-alone offence of non-fatal strangulation is effective. Hundreds of women’s lives depend on this change being made to the Domestic Abuse Bill.

There is a lot of research on this topic and further information is available in the Centre for Women’s Justice briefings here: [short briefing](https://www.centreforwomensjustice.org.uk/s/CWJ-briefing-NFS51020.pdf) and [full briefing.](https://www.centreforwomensjustice.org.uk/s/CWJ-non-fatal-strangulationCommittee-briefing21520.pdf)

I would be very grateful to know if you would write to the Minister and would support an amendment to improve protection for victims of domestic violence in this way.

Regards

**[Your Name]**