

My Intervention in the Energy Bill (Lords amendments)

John Redwood, Wokingham, Conservative:

I agree with the Secretary of State that we need more energy independence and more domestic energy, so why does the Bill propose a 140% increase in imported energy through interconnectors, which will make us more dependent and very vulnerable?

Grant Shapps, Minister of State for Energy Security and Net Zero:

My right hon. Friend makes an excellent comment, as ever, on interconnectors, but I would point out that with the growing number of interconnectors, particularly electricity interconnectors, last winter, for example, we were able to export 10 TW to France through interconnectors, providing us with income. The answer is that they work in both directions, and in some cases, they provide the reliability of, for example, France's vast nuclear fleet of 56 reactors. When whose reactors were down last winter—because even nuclear power sometimes has to come offline—we have been able to export our power to France, and it has been a net export. Our mission is to secure the clean and inexpensive energy that Britain needs to prosper.

Retained EU law

Brexit has delivered two important changes that get no mention. We no longer pay annual contributions to the EU – and have increased the NHS budget by more than the savings and by more than proposed on the bus. We no longer come under the large amounts of new law coming out of Brussels, leaving us free to decide if we want a law at all and if so what would be the best one for us. Many hundreds of pieces of legislation passed since we left do not apply in GB.

The PM promised to carry on with the Bill planned by his predecessors, the EU Retained Law Bill. He saw the advantage of tailoring law to our needs. The aim was to remove all those inherited laws from the Statute book that were no longer relevant to us, the ones we had opposed unsuccessfully as members, and the ones where we could put in place something more effective for us. Jacob Rees Mogg when Business Secretary got the civil service to produce a website or dashboard with all the pieces of relevant law listed.

When I set out to write this yesterday officials had taken the dashboard down and left a message saying this useful resource is “no longer available”. That was a chilling message. When I complained it reappeared. It seems to square with news leaks that the current Business Secretary wishes to dilute the legislation, turning it into a device to keep most EU laws instead of

initiating the proper review we need. Officials were said to always have been reluctant to carry out the exercise and to recommend pruning EU law. Clearly some senior officials and some business lobby groups have forgotten the good reasons the UK had for trying to prevent or to modify endless EU legislative proposals when we were a member. My main recollection from my days as Single Market Minister were many discussions, lobbyings and meetings to try to stall or dilute unwanted legislation that mainly served to give the EU more powers over more areas of government and our lives. It was doing the detailed work as Single market Minister and seeing the damage to innovation, small business and enterprise that much of the regulation would do that made me consider changing our relationship with the emerging government of the EU.

The EU Retained law Bill passed the Commons with a large majority and little Conservative disagreement. It would be odd if Labour decided to use their peers to try to wreck one of the gains of Brexit close to an election, after they lost so many votes over trying to stop Brexit in the previous Parliament. I hope the PM tells the Business Secretary if she does want to dilute this to think again. We could be better for freeing ourselves of laws that cost too much and get in the way. Of course the plan was always to keep important employment, safety and environmental safeguards and where necessary to continue with our UK policy of going beyond the core standards laid down by the EU in those areas.

Burghfield Cake Artist Creates Coronation Cake

My constituent, Elizabeth Wood, who runs Cake Buds in Burghfield, has asked me to share her story about her collaboration with cake artist, Rosalind Miller on the Coronation Cake, which was presented as a gift at Windsor Castle in commemoration of the Coronation. I am delighted that she had the opportunity to take part in creating such a splendid cake which was indeed a work of art.



[My Interview with Talk TV's Richard Tice](#)

Please find below my Interview with Talk TV's Richard Tice where we discussed the Coronation, the local election results and net migration.

You can find my interview below between 26:18-36:48.

[Questions about the Energy Bill](#)

Yesterday we debated the Energy Bill. This piece of legislation has support from the main Opposition parties and is more to do with the road to net zero than how to have plentiful good value energy for homes and businesses. It proposes additional complex regulations to seek faster movement to a decarbonised future.

It raises a number of questions which I have been posing to Ministers and the wider public in my words on energy. They include

Why does it require a 140% increase in our interconnector capacity to be able to import more energy from the continent? If the aim is energy self sufficiency and more domestic production we should not need that extra spending on connectors.

How will a £20 bn spend on carbon capture and storage be paid for? The Secretary of State says the UK has storage for £5 trillion of saved carbon costs, but as the saved carbon costs are presumably at least in part UK tax revenues foregone from emissions trading and carbon taxes, it is not obvious to see how the money is raised to purchase the facilities or how the costs of running them are defrayed, other than through other additional tax payments.

What impact will the higher standards for the energy performance of buildings have on the supply of rented accommodation? Isn't there a danger more landlords will decide they cannot afford the extra costs of installation of energy saving measures and will withdraw their properties from the rented market? What will be the rent increase where they do put in the new measures?

The Bill talks about the need for more smart machines and more time switching to ration available electricity. People will not be able to come home from work, put an electric car on charge and turn on a series of home appliances all at the same time but will need persuading or requiring to run some machines and rechargers overnight when there is less electricity demand. What will the likely balance be between discounted night rates, penalty day rates and cut outs or bans on smart machine use and via smart meters?

The Bill perpetuates a complex system of managed prices, price controls, bidding competitions for rights to supply, windfall taxes, company subsidies and government interventions to try to ensure sufficient power. What impact does this wide ranging and frequently changing set of interventions have on private sector willingness to invest in future energy provision?

The government says it wants nuclear to play an important part of reliable domestic electricity supply, yet on current plans nuclear output reduces substantially this decade with various closures and only one opening of a new station. When will firm orders be placed for small nuclear installations?

Why is grid expansion proposed at only a doubling when if most people had electric cars and heat pumps and industry had gone largely electric we would need considerably more capacity than that?