

# UK Borders Bill faces avalanche of defeats in the House of Lords for second time

The proposed legislation will go back to the Commons, where ministers could be forced to make concessions to get the controversial bill passed.

The UK government's controversial Nationality and Borders Bill faced another slew of defeats in the House of Lords on Monday, with ten losses.

Peers stripped away clauses that sought to differentiate asylum seekers based on their method of arrival; a key point of criticism of the proposed legislation dubbed the "anti-refugee bill" by critics.

The House of Lords voted to ensure the bill guaranteed asylum seekers their rights under the 1951 Refugee Convention.

They also voted in favour of allowing asylum seekers the right to work if their cases were not resolved in six months and for formal agreements to be required with third-party states to ensure safe returns.

The 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol are key legal documents with a core principle of non-refoulement, which asserts that a refugee should not be returned to a country where they face serious threats to their life or freedom.

"Today, the House of Lords has taken a strong stand for humanity and compassion, voting to treat refugees equally regardless of how they get here and to make a commitment to the resettlement of refugees," wrote UK charity The Refugee Council on Twitter.

The only vote to go in the UK government's favour was over whether the best interests of a child must be the "primary consideration" in decisions affecting under-18s.

This is the second time the controversial bill has faced an avalanche of defeats in the Lords. The legislation will be once again be returned to the House of Commons. The back-and-forth process - known as ping-pong - will continue until

one chamber is forced to make concessions.

Together With Refugees @RefugeeTogether

Lords voted to scrap Clause 11 / 2-tier system in #NationalityandBordersBill for 2nd time! Big for our campaign & shows Peers get why differentiated treatment is unfair & at odds with Ref. Convention. Strong speeches from Lord Kerr + others, fight continues! #TogetherWithRefugees

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Despite continued opposition, a report on Tuesday said UK British Prime Minister Boris Johnson will soon issue a statement on the controversial plan to 'outsource' the processing of asylum seekers to Rwanda, according to The Times.

The Borders Bill has been put forward by the government as a way to "make it easier to remove someone with a pending asylum claim to a safe third country".

The British newspaper reported that Johnson wanted to "go ahead" with the plan but that it was "just not ready". It is believed that an announcement is likely to come, if the Borders Bill passes through all stages, before the Queen's Speech next month.

The decision to set up offshoring processing centres has faced fierce objections in the House of Commons and Lords.

Conservative politician, and former chief whip, Andrew Mitchell called offshore centres "a moral, financial and practical failure" in an email circulated among Tory rebels, according to the Guardian.

Conservative former minister Lord Cormack has previously said: "I just cannot for the life of me think that to herd people into encampments in Rwanda and other far distant places is anything other than a repudiation of our standards as a great country," according to the Independent.

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Source:

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