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Dear Stakeholder,

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Coroner Reform Bulletin – update on the Coroners and Justice Act 2009

During the progress of the Coroners and Justice Bill, you have been kept informed of the various stages of its journey through Parliament. The Bill has received Royal Assent, which means that it is now an Act of Parliament: the Coroners and Justice Act 2009.

I am enclosing the last of the Coroner Reform Bulletins, which describes the amendments made in the last few stages of the Bill. Overall, Parliament has welcomed the reform to the coroner system and has only sought to improve particular aspects of the proposals, and I believe we have ended the legislative process with a really strong set of reforms.

Thank you very much for your interest and support. I recognise that you might not agree with everything that is in the new Act but I have been impressed by the constructive way in which you have made known your concerns. The next phase begins now, with the implementation process of all the reforms. This will take place over the next two to three years. We need to make the new national appointments, prepare supporting rules and regulations, review the draft Charter for the Bereaved, and look at the practicalities of operating the new system.

As you may know, I am standing down as an MP, and therefore as a Minister, at the next General Election, but I am really pleased to have led on this extremely important piece of Government legislation. I can assure you I will be watching closely as the reforms begin to take effect in the years to come and I will certainly be writing to my MP if I feel that they fall short of their intended effect!

BRIDGET PRENTICE