



Free votes in the House of Commons since 1997

Parliamentary Information List

Standard Note: SN/PC/04793

Last updated: 11 February 2013

Author: Department of Information Services

If a free vote is announced, MPs and Members of the Lords are allowed to vote as they wish and are not controlled by the Party whips.

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish definitively between whipped and genuinely free votes. The weekly whip sent to Members of Parliament is a confidential document and it is therefore not possible to identify whether every vote is whipped or not. However, Parties often let it be known when they are giving Members a free vote.

Please note that this PIL only contains known free votes in the Commons.

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[Standard notes](#) – a selection of less formal briefings, often produced in response to frequently asked questions, are accessible via the Internet.

[Guides to Parliament](#) – The House of Commons Information Office answers enquiries on the work, history and membership of the House of Commons. It also produces a range of publications about the House which are available for free in hard copy on request

[Education web site](#) – a web site for children and schools with information and activities about Parliament.

Any comments or corrections to the lists would be gratefully received and should be sent to: [Parliamentary Information Lists Editor](#), Parliament & Constitution Centre, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

Session and Date	Debate	Hansard reference	Divisions	
			Ayes	Noes
2012-13				
05 February 2013	Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill	558 c125-231	400	175
2010-12				
10 February 2011	Voting by Prisoners; Backbench Business Debate	523 c493-586	234	22
2007-08				
20 May 2008	Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill	476 c166-290	233	304
20 May 2008	Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill	476 c166-290	173	309
20 May 2008	Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill	476 c166-290	190	332
20 May 2008	Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill	476 c166-290	84	387
20 May 2008	Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill	476 c166-290	71	393
20 May 2008	Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill	476 c166-290	222	290
20 May 2008	Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill	476 c166-290	217	292
19 May 2008	Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill	476 c22-131	200	293
19 May 2008	Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill	476 c22-131	163	342
19 May 2008	Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill	476 c22-131	149	318
19 May 2008	Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill	476 c22-131	181	314
19 May 2008	Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill	476 c22-131	223	286
19 May 2008	Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill	476 c22-131	176	336
2006-07				
07 March 2007	House of Lords Reform	457 c1524-638	391	111
07 March 2007	House of Lords Reform	457 c1524-638	241	329
07 March 2007	House of Lords Reform	457 c1524-638	337	224
07 March 2007	House of Lords Reform	457 c1524-638	305	267
07 March 2007	House of Lords Reform	457 c1524-638	178	392
07 March 2007	House of Lords Reform	457 c1524-638	155	418
07 March 2007	House of Lords Reform	457 c1524-638	196	375
07 March 2007	House of Lords Reform	457 c1524-638	416	163

Session and Date	Debate	Hansard reference	Divisions	
			Ayes	Noes
2005-06				
01 November 2006	Legislative Process	451 c304-421	122	354
01 November 2006	Legislative Process	451 c304-421	290	199
14 March 2006	Animal Welfare Bill	443 c1330-1427	267	278
14 March 2006	Animal Welfare Bill	443 c1330-1427	476	63
14 February 2006	Health Bill	442 c1290-392	413	129
14 February 2006	Health Bill	442 c1290-392	384	184
14 February 2006	Health Bill	442 c1290-392	453	125
2004-05				
10 March 2005	Support for Members Who Have Not Taken Seats	431 c1704-60	171	357
10 March 2005	Support for Members Who Have Not Taken Seats	431 c1704-60	170	358
26 January 2005	Modernisation of the House of Commons	430 c327-93	111	249
26 January 2005	Modernisation of the House of Commons	430 c327-93	375	14
26 January 2005	Modernisation of the House of Commons	430 c327-93	80	388
26 January 2005	Modernisation of the House of Commons	430 c327-93	292	225
2003-04				
18 November 2004	Hunting Bill	426 c1473-507	283	132
18 November 2004	Hunting Bill	426 c1473-507	46	345
18 November 2004	Hunting Bill	426 c1473-507	146	286
18 November 2004	Hunting Bill	426 c1473-507	271	136
03 November 2004	Members' Allowances	426 c315-69	118	193
03 November 2004	Members' Allowances	426 c315-69	239	109
26 October 2004	Programming of Bills	425 c1308-406	242	167
26 October 2004	Programming of Bills	425 c1308-406	296	137
26 October 2004	Programming of Bills	425 c1308-406	300	130
26 October 2004	Programming of Bills	425 c1308-406	261	173
26 October 2004	Programming of Bills	425 c1308-406	182	257
26 October 2004	Programming of Bills	425 c1308-406	174	271
26 October 2004	Programming of Bills	425 c1308-406	191	265
12 May 2004	Visitor Facilities	421 c447-9	333	46

Session and Date	Debate	Hansard reference	Divisions	
			Ayes	Noes
22 April 2004	Security Screen	420 c462-507	112	76
22 April 2004	Security Screen	420 c462-507	92	99
2002-03				
30 October 2003	Pay for Chairmen of Select Committees	412 c448-507	81	53
30 October 2003	Pay for Chairmen of Select Committees	412 c448-507	86	59
08 September 2003	Water Bill	410 c56-135	350	135
08 September 2003	Water Bill	410 c56-135	136	356
09 July 2003	Hunting Bill	408 c1281-341	317	145
09 July 2003	Hunting Bill	408 c1281-341	145	282
10 March 2003	Local Government Bill	401 c40-129	77	368
04 February 2003	House of Lords Reform	399 c152-243	253	316
04 February 2003	House of Lords Reform	399 c152-243	281	284
04 February 2003	House of Lords Reform	399 c152-243	272	289
04 February 2003	House of Lords Reform	399 c152-243	245	323
04 February 2003	House of Lords Reform	399 c152-243	172	390
16 December 2002	Hunting Bill	396 c570-656	368	155
16 December 2002	Hunting Bill	396 c570-656	164	365
2001-02				
29 October 2002	Modernisation of the House of Commons	391 c689-843	309	153
29 October 2002	Modernisation of the House of Commons	391 c689-843	313	153
29 October 2002	Modernisation of the House of Commons	391 c689-843	365	147
29 October 2002	Modernisation of the House of Commons	391 c689-843	274	267
29 October 2002	Modernisation of the House of Commons	391 c689-843	311	234
29 October 2002	Modernisation of the House of Commons	391 c689-843	265	288

Session and Date	Debate	Hansard reference	Divisions	
			Ayes	Noes
29 October 2002	Modernisation of the House of Commons	391 c689-843	256	283
29 October 2002	Modernisation of the House of Commons	391 c689-843	144	386
29 October 2002	Modernisation of the House of Commons	391 c689-843	411	47
29 October 2002	Modernisation of the House of Commons	391 c689-843	94	441
29 October 2002	Modernisation of the House of Commons	391 c689-843	150	394
14 May 2002	Modernisation of the House of Commons	385 c648-730	78	261
14 May 2002	Modernisation of the House of Commons	385 c648-730	199	158
14 May 2002	Modernisation of the House of Commons	385 c648-730	175	197
14 May 2002	Modernisation of the House of Commons	385 c648-730	195	209
14 May 2002	Modernisation of the House of Commons	385 c648-730	50	352
18 March 2002	Hunting with Dogs	382 c52-139	386	175
18 March 2002	Hunting with Dogs	382 c52-139	169	371
18 March 2002	Hunting with Dogs	382 c52-139	154	401
19 July 2001	Select Committees	372 c508-20	304	55
16 July 2001	Select Committees	372 c35-90	52	351
16 July 2001	Select Committees	372 c35-90	221	308
16 July 2001	Select Committees	372 c35-90	232	301
05 July 2001	Members' Allowances, Insurance &c.	371 c421-77	289	33
05 July 2001	Members' Allowances, Insurance &c.	371 c421-77	215	172
05 July 2001	Members' Allowances, Insurance &c.	371 c421-77	276	42
05 July 2001	Members' Allowances, Insurance &c.	371 c421-77	66	260
05 July 2001	Members' Allowances, Insurance &c.	371 c421-77	229	117
2000-01				
22 March 2001	Election of a Speaker	365 c498-541	82	84
17 January 2001	Hunting Bill	361 c354-474	387	174
17 January 2001	Hunting Bill	361 c354-474	182	382
17 January 2001	Hunting Bill	361 c354-474	155	399
20 December 2000	Hunting Bill	360 c379-467	373	158
19 December 2000	Human Fertilisation and Embryology	360 c211-66	366	174

Session and Date	Debate	Hansard reference	Divisions	
			Ayes	Noes
1999-2000				
31 October 2000	Stem Cell Research	355 c626-31	83	175
14 April 2000	Medical Treatment (Prevention of Euthanasia) Bill	348 c603-66	96	10
28 February 2000	Sexual Offences (Amendment) Bill	345 c127-30	317	117
10 February 2000	Sexual Offences (Amendment) Bill	344 c432-500	263	102
28 January 2000	Medical Treatment (Prevention of Euthanasia) Bill	343 c686-751	113	2
1998-99				
25 January 1999	Sexual Offences (Amendment) Bill	324 c20-109	313	130
1997-98				
22 June 1998	Crime and Disorder Bill	314 c709-811	194	234
22 June 1998	Crime and Disorder Bill	314 c709-811	336	129
28 November 1997	Wild Mammals (Hunting with Dogs) Bill	301 c1199-271	411	151

Scope: All divisions announced as being a free vote for Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat Members

Sources: House of Commons Information Office