



HER MAJESTY'S  
MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH  
TO BOTH HOUSES OF  
PARLIAMENT

Delivered on  
WEDNESDAY, 3<sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER 2008



# THE QUEEN'S SPEECH TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

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## MY LORDS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

My Government's overriding priority is to ensure the stability of the British economy during the global economic downturn. My Government is committed to helping families and businesses through difficult times.

The strength of the financial sector is vital to the future vibrancy of the economy. Therefore, legislation will continue to be taken forward to ensure fairer and more secure protection for bank depositors and to improve the resilience of the financial sector.

My Government will also bring forward proposals to create Saving Gateway Accounts to encourage people on lower incomes to save more by offering financial incentives.

My Government will bring forward legislation to promote local economic development and to create greater opportunities for community and individual involvement in local decision-making.

A Bill will be brought forward to reform the welfare system, to improve incentives for people to move from benefits into sustained employment and to provide greater support, choice and control for disabled people.

My Government is committed to protecting the public and ensuring the nation's safety.

A Bill will be brought forward to increase the effectiveness and public accountability of policing, to reduce crime and disorder and to enhance airport security.

My Government will also bring forward a Bill to deliver a more effective, transparent and responsive justice system for victims, witnesses and the wider public. The Bill would also improve the coroners service, and the process of death certification, and provide increased support for bereaved families, including the families of servicemen and women.

A Bill will be brought forward to strengthen border controls, by bringing together customs and immigration powers. The Bill would also ensure that newcomers to the United Kingdom earn the right to stay.

My Government is committed to ensuring everyone has a fair chance in life. My Government will bring forward a Bill to promote equality, fight discrimination and introduce transparency in the workplace to help address the difference in pay between men and women.

My Government will enshrine in law its commitment to eradicate child poverty by 2020.

Because the health of the nation is vital to its success and well-being, a Bill will be brought forward to strengthen the National Health Service. The Bill would create a duty to take account of the new National Health Service Constitution that will set out the core principles of the Service and the rights and responsibilities of patients and staff. The Bill would also introduce measures to improve the quality of health care and public health.

My Government will bring forward a Bill to reform education, training and apprenticeships, to promote excellence in all schools, to improve local services for children and parents and to provide a right for those in work to request time for training.

My Government will continue to take forward proposals on constitutional renewal, including strengthening the role of Parliament and other measures.

My Government will bring forward measures to protect the environment for future generations. A Bill will be introduced to manage marine resources and to create a new right of public access to the coastline.

My Government will continue to work closely with the devolved administrations in the interests of all the people of the United Kingdom. My Government is committed to the Northern Ireland political process and will bring forward further measures for sustainable, devolved government.

## MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Estimates for the public services will be laid before you.

## MY LORDS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

My Government will work towards European action on economic stability, on climate change, on energy, enlargement and security.

My Government will work for a coordinated international response to the global downturn, including by hosting the next G20 Summit on financial markets and the world economy in the United Kingdom in April next year and reforming financial institutions. My Government will continue to work as part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation including at its sixtieth anniversary summit.

My Government will press for a comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East, for continued progress in Iraq and for effective measures to address concerns over Iran's nuclear programme.

My Government will work with the Governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan for security, stability and prosperity.

The Duke of Edinburgh and I look forward to receiving the President of Mexico.

Other measures will be laid before you.

## MY LORDS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS:

I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon your counsels.





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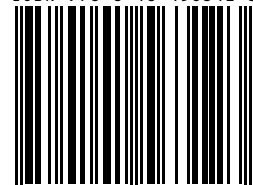
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