(**Name and address of your local MP**)

**Address 1**

**Address 2**

**Post code**

**Date**

Dear (**Your local MP**)

**Safeguarding the future of our justice system**

I am writing on behalf of (**your local law society**) to highlight the crisis facing our criminal justice system and to urge you to raise this important issue in Parliament.

Following 25 years of cuts and inflation, without any significant rise in investment, criminal legal aid is on the brink of collapse. The Government must rapidly implement in full the recommendations of the Independent Review of Criminal Legal Aid, which the Government commissioned, if it is to prevent this outcome.

The Independent Review of Criminal Legal Aid set out the clear need for a 15% increase in all criminal legal aid rates, stating that this was the minimum necessary to sustain the system. However, in its response to the review, the Government has instead put forward a package that is 40% less than this minimum for solicitors.

Since 2007, the number of criminal legal aid firms has halved. This means fewer practitioners are able to handle cases and more victims, witnesses and defendants, are suffering delays to justice. These Government proposals will not be enough to prevent the closure of more criminal legal aid firms and it will not ensure our justice system has the capacity to address the courts backlog.

I hope you will consider raising this critical issue in Parliament to advocate for the Government to put in place the investment our justice system needs. I can provide suggested questions that you could raise in Parliament, and I would be delighted to meet with you to discuss this further if that would be helpful.

Kind regards,