The Telegram

Bill inspired by Bagbys gets ‘a step closer’

British House of Commons
23 Mar 2010 BY STEVE BARTLETT
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The Bagby bill is off to the Senate. Bill C-464 gives courts the power to justify refusing bail to people accused of serious crimes in the name of protecting their children younger than 18.

On Monday, it unanimously passed a third reading in the House of Commons and now moves to the upper chamber for approval.
“ We’re another step closer (to becoming law),” said Scott Andrews, the Liberal MP for Avalon who introduced the Bill as a private member’s motion.

His interest in the issue was spurred by the documentary “Dear Zachary,” and from learning of David and Kate Bagby’s efforts to reform Canada’s bail laws.

In 2003, the Bagbys’ 13-month-old grand- son, Zachary, was drowned by his mother Shirley Turner in a murder-suicide in the waters off Conception Bay South. Turner was the accused killer of the Bagbys’ son, Andrew. At the time of her death, she was awaiting extradition to the U.S. to stand trial for Andrew’s murder, but was out on bail and had custody of Zachary.
Andrews introduced the bill in October, and in December, it had a second reading in the House.

Total support

The motion was sent for a third and final reading last Tuesday,

Scott Andrews

after receiving unanimous support from the House of Commons justice committee.

The rookie Liberal MP hoped last week that final reading would happen as soon as possible.

He said Monday it came sooner than expected through a deal he made with Peter Stouffer, a New Democratic member from Nova Scotia.
“I got (Stouffer) to trade out his private member’s day for mine,” Andrews explained, “which means instead of doing it in late April, I got my bill back before Parliament this morning.”

Tommy Banks, a Liberal senator from Alberta, will champion the bill through the upper chamber.

“ It’s gratifying (to get to this stage),” Andrews said, “ but you know it’s also very humbling, ’cause you’re still thinking about David and Kate and Zachary and all that. But it’s great that you can have progress on a private member’s Bill because, since 2001, only 21 of 2,400 private member’s bills ever see royal assent.”

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