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Letters

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# Contaminated blood bill will bring justice

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The Guardian, Tuesday 2 February 2010

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I am writing to express my thanks to Ruth Rendell for her support of the contaminated blood (support for infected and bereaved persons) bill ([Letters](#), 30 January). The bill was instituted by Lord Morris of Manchester and has passed rapidly through the [House of Lords](#), unchallenged and widely supported.

As secretary of the campaign group [TaintedBlood](#), I know only too well about the issues she refers to. My husband, Bob Threakall, died in 1991 as a result of receiving contaminated [NHS](#) blood products and I, along with many others, have been campaigning for justice ever since. People in our small, finite community have suffered cruelly and continue to do so. We hear on a daily basis of those who are living below the poverty line. Many of our members are very sick. We have a death rate now of approximately one person per month. It is only now, with the advent of this bill, that we have a chance to see the government do the right thing.

No amount of money will bring back those we have lost, but the financial measures outlined in the bill will give some peace of mind to those who are dying or bereaved. Furthermore, the bill makes recommendations that will help give us the best chance to avoid this kind of tragedy happening again.

As Rendell points out, we now have overwhelming support for our cause. It will be a travesty if this bill fails to receive its second reading in the House of Commons.

## Sue Threakall

*taintedblood.info*

- There is only one person who has the power to make this bill law – Gordon Brown. But to date he has never spoken publicly about this issue. Surely no one in full knowledge of this issue, and with the power to make this bill law, could remain silent. The haemophilia community and all infected deserve this wrong to be righted. I write this letter with a current worse-case prognosis of six months due to HCC liver cancer caused by [hepatitis C](#), so to finally hear the PM state his support would mean so much to my family after 30 years of waiting for some accountability.

## Haydn Lewis

*Cardiff*

- It is regrettable that Ruth Rendell fans the flames of stigma borne by another group of people. HIV is not "a horror", nor is it a "life-threatening illness". Since 1996 HIV has been a manageable condition; most positive people in the UK are healthy with an expected normal lifespan.

My two children are HIV-positive. In three years they have missed one day from school between them due to illness. They were born before the introduction of prenatal screening.

The greatest challenge for many who are HIV-positive is the stigma, stemming from fear and ignorance about HIV. But people with HIV are surviving, working, having children and growing old. And yes, I am positive, too.

**Name and address supplied**

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