



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP
Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

Dear Alok

As you may know, the Employment (Dismissal and Re-employment) Bill is scheduled to receive its second reading on 30th October. However, in reality this is extremely unlikely to happen given its position on the order paper.

This Bill, introduced by Gavin Newlands MP, would prevent employers from forcing workers to sign up to wage cuts and inferior conditions under threat of dismissal.

We represent some of the hundreds of thousands of workers who have been at the receiving end of these tactics, including employees of companies such as British Airways and Centrica.

We believe these actions are wrong, detrimental to our economy, and place the UK at a competitive disadvantage as compared to other European countries, most of whom have similar legislation in place.

It is clear that the coronavirus pandemic has fundamentally altered labour markets and employment conditions, perhaps permanently. Like all developed economies, the UK must adapt and prepare for the 'new normal'. Improving the relationship between employer and employee should be one aspect of that adaptation.

Due to the pandemic many businesses – indeed entire sectors - are under huge financial pressure and no one, including trades unions, is claiming that all jobs can be saved in a recession as severe as the one we face. However, a business, Government, even society itself will be judged as to how we get through this extremely difficult period. Is it by working together and introducing temporary measures to reduce cash burn and save jobs, or instead by arbitrarily forcing workers onto permanently reduced, often significantly, contracts or face redundancy?

We do not want to see businesses struggle as a result of the proposed changes – far from it. Indeed, at a time when job security and stability are as important as they will ever be, we believe that providing staff with some form of protection against these kinds of practices is not just beneficial to employers, it will also provide support and growth across our whole economy, encouraging consumer spending and maximising the income within the retail and service sectors; people are unlikely to spend money if they fear their wages and their jobs can be slashed at the drop of a hat.

This simple amendment to existing employment legislation would benefit millions of people overnight, supporting responsible employers while making clear to those with less scruples that these sorts of actions are not permitted in this country.

We urge you and your Cabinet colleagues to adopt this Bill – or introduce some form of it – and ensure that our workforce and our businesses are fully equipped for the challenges we must collectively overcome.

Yours,



Gavin Newlands MP

Andrew Gwynne MP
Dave Doogan MP
Marion Fellows MP
Kenny Macaskill MP
Hannah Bardell MP
Kevin Brennan MP
Anne McLaughlin MP
John McDonnell MP
Steven Bonnar MP
Alyn Smith MP
Margaret Ferrier MP
Sally-Ann Hart MP
Stewart McDonald MP
Drew Hendry MP
Debbie Abrahams MP
Gavin Robinson MP
Alison Thewliss MP
Virendra Sharma MP
Carol Monaghan MP
Brendan O'Hara MP
Stephen McCabe MP
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Douglas Chapman MP
Peter Grant MP
Apsana Begum MP
Peter Dowd MP
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Kirsty Blackman MP
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Diane Abbott MP
Tommy Sheppard MP
Daniel Poulter MP
Deirdre Brock MP
Stuart McDonald MP
Patricia Gibson MP
Neil Gray MP
Mhairi Black MP
Lisa Cameron MP
Angela Crawley MP
Angus Brendan MacNeil MP
Pete Wishart MP

Ronnie Cowan MP
Kirsten Oswald MP
Stephen Flynn MP
Munira Wilson MP
Caroline Lucas MP
Bell Ribeiro-Addy MP
Philippa Whitford MP
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Ian Byrne MP
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