



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon Jacob Rees-Mogg MP- Minister of State, Brexit Opportunities
Heather Wheeler, MP – Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office
Cabinet Office
70 Whitehall
London SW1A 2AS

27th June 2022

Dear Jacob

Recommendation to Implement Caps on Trade Union Facility Time by Public Sector Employees

Strike action, organised by the trade unions, is causing frustrating and unnecessary disruption to people across the country. People are finding it hard or impossible to get to work, to make health appointments or are having their travel plans wrecked.

These actions draw attention to the use of taxpayers' money to support trade unions via "facility time" (when public sector employees are being paid by taxpayers but are actually working on behalf of their trade union).

Given that trade unions receive subscriptions from their members to pay for their activities, it is difficult to understand why taxpayers are also required to provide financial support to public sector unions in this way.

Recent research shows that in 2020-21, 23,545 part-time union officials in the public sector cost taxpayers nearly £100 million in trade union facility time.

Over 1,000 public sector workers spent **all** their working time on union duties. More than half of these were employed by local authorities which deliver vital services, and a further quarter by the NHS which is already under pressure to deal with the post Covid backlog.

The proportion of total wage bill costs granted for facility time varies quite markedly across the public sector, frequently in excess of the average for the core civil service of approximately 0.05 per cent of the total wage bill.

The Trade Union Act 2016 gave ministers reserve powers regarding facility time. These powers extend to the publication of information; costs to public funds; the nature of work

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carried out; whether the work is relevant to the amount of facility time and any other matters considered relevant.

It is time to implement changes, already available in this legislation, to restrict the use of taxpayer money to fund trade union officials in the public sector.

We recommend that existing guidance for facility time used by the civil service should be extended to cover all public sector employers and the spending cap reduced to the current civil service average of 0.05 per cent.

We further recommend that a cap be imposed to set a maximum of 50 per cent on the proportion of time that any individual public sector employee may allocate to trade union duties.

These changes can be made quickly and would have our support as well as that of our constituents.

Sincerely

Richard Fuller

Adam Afriyie

Peter Aldous

Lee Anderson

Steve Baker

Bob Blackman

Crispin Blunt

Peter Bone

Ben Bradley

Miriam Cates

Geoffrey Clinton-Brown

Philip Davies

Jonathan Djanogly

Philip Dunne

Simon Fell

Robert Goodwill

Chris Green

Sally Ann Hart

Gordon Henderson

Kevin Hollinrake

Philip Hollobone

Adam Holloway

Mark Jenkinson

David Jones

Alicia Kearns

Jonathan Lord

Timothy Loughton

Craig Mackinlay

Jerome Mayhew

Karl McCartney

Nigel Mills

Anne Marie Morris

Kieran Mullan

Mark Pawsey

John Penrose

Tom Randall

Andrew Rosindell

Gary Sambrook

Greg Smith

Henry Smith

John Stevenson

Bob Stewart

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Kelly Tolhurst

Craig Tracey

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