



Rt Hon. Nick Thomas-Symonds MP
Minister for the Cabinet Office
His Majesty's Paymaster General
Cabinet Office 70 Whitehall London
SW1A 2AS

Simon Hoare MP
Chair, Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

11 March 2026

Dear Simon,

As I expect you are aware, the Government introduced to Parliament the Ministerial Salaries (Amendment) Bill on 5 March 2026.

The current statutory limits on the number of salaried Ministers and eight other office-holders were established under the Ministerial and other Salaries Act 1975. Under this Act, the Government can pay a salary to a maximum of 109 Ministers. Within this limit there are cumulative limits on the number of salaries as follows:

- a maximum of 21 salaries can be paid at Cabinet level,
- a maximum of 50 salaries can be paid at Cabinet and Minister of State level,
- a maximum of 83 salaries can be paid at Cabinet, Minister of State, and Parliamentary Secretary level.

There are separate limits on the number of salaries that can be paid to the Law Officers, the Lord Chancellor, and Government Whips.

These limits have remained unchanged for over half a century, despite the vastly different landscape of modern politics. Successive administrations have found these limits increasingly incompatible with the evolving demands of modern Government. While the 1975 Act provides for 109 ministerial salaries, the average size of Government since 2010 has been approximately 120 Ministers, and all Governments since 2010 have appointed more than 109 Ministers.

Due to these limits, Governments of all parties have become dependent on Ministers being willing and able to work unpaid. These roles have often fallen disproportionately to Ministers appointed from the House of Lords. This is in part due to the corresponding cap of a maximum number of 95 Ministers that can be appointed from the House of Commons under the House of Commons Disqualification Act 1975.

The Government has therefore introduced to Parliament the Ministerial Salaries (Amendment) Bill which will amend the statutory limit on ministerial salaries from 109 to 120. Within this limit, the Bill will amend the cumulative limits as follows:

- a maximum of 22 salaries can be paid at Cabinet level (+1),
- a maximum of 54 salaries can be paid at Cabinet and Minister of State level (+4),
- a maximum of 94 salaries can be paid at Cabinet, Minister of State, and Parliamentary Secretary level (+11).

The number of salaries that can be paid to the Law Officers, Lord Chancellor, Government Whips and other office-holders will remain unchanged.

The Bill does not seek to alter Ministers' salary amounts. After the General Election the Prime Minister decided to maintain the pay freeze on Ministerial pay, and salaries will remain frozen.

This Bill will update the number of salaries that can be paid to Government Ministers for the first time in over 50 years, reflecting the demands of modern Government and largely ending the practice of unpaid Ministers.

I very much look forward to working with you and the Committee throughout the passage of this Bill and would be happy to meet with you to discuss further if you wish.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'N. Thomas-Symonds', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**RT HON NICK THOMAS-SYMONDS MP
MINISTER FOR THE CABINET OFFICE
HIS MAJESTY'S PAYMASTER GENERAL**