



Work and Pensions Committee Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

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From the Chairs

Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP
Secretary of State
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
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14 May 2021

Dear Kwasi,

Employment Bill

The impact of coronavirus has been felt acutely by people in precarious and low paid work. That makes it all the more important to clarify the law on employment status, to protect people's rights at work.

We were, therefore, surprised to see no mention of the Employment Bill in the Queen's Speech this week.

The Queen's Speech in December 2019 announced that the Government would introduce an Employment Bill. The explanatory notes to the Queen's Speech said that one of the purposes of the Bill was to "build on existing employment law with measures that protect those in low-paid work and the gig economy". The Bill was, however, never published.

The Work and Pensions Committee, in its June 2020 report on [DWP's response to the coronavirus outbreak](#), recommended that the Government should "*bring forward the Employment Bill for parliamentary scrutiny as soon as possible, to increase the legal protection available to people in low-paid work and the gig economy.*"

In response, DWP told us that:

At the Queen's Speech, Government committed to bring forward an Employment Bill and the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy will bring forward detailed proposals on legislation in due course. The Minister for Employment is due to meet the lead Minister for the Bill in September.

You will also be aware of the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee's long-standing interest in the Employment Bill, and the Committee's intention to launch an inquiry into it as one strand of its broader Post-Pandemic Economic Growth inquiry.

Please could you let us know the following:

1. Why was there no mention of the Employment Bill in the recent Queen's Speech?
2. Does the Government still plan to legislate in this area? If so, when do you expect to bring forward proposals?
3. What discussions have taken place between Ministers in BEIS and DWP about the Bill?
4. What plans do you have to amend employment law through secondary legislation in this session?
5. How does the Government intend to keep pace with fast-moving employment-related court judgements, in the absence of the Employment Bill?
6. Will any of the measures initially mooted to be implemented through the Employment Bill be contained in any of the other bills announced in the Queen's Speech?

We would be grateful for a reply by 21 May.

Yours sincerely,



Rt Hon Stephen Timms MP
Chair, Work and Pensions Committee



Darren Jones MP
Chair, Business, Energy and Industrial
Strategy Committee