

Written evidence submitted by Simon Way

My name is Simon Way and I am a freelance photographer with over ten years experience, including photographing for major brands and even government ministers.

I work as a sole director of a limited company, Simon Way Ltd, which was formed after some of my clients insisted my business was setup this way, in order to continue commissioning me as employment law insisted upon it from there perspective. My only income is through my photography business so this is in no way a guise for other ventures.

Being a sociable job by its nature, my work dried up over night when the lockdown happened, all my bookings were cancelled and I see it highly likely I will not be commissioned again this year.

I am entitled to furlough myself where I will be given around £600/month for March / April and May. Plus universal credit of around £90 a week. I am not allowed to work on my business in anything other than a clerical role as a director.

By contrast friends who do the exact same job as a photographer but are a sole trader and not a limited company director are allowed to claim £2,500/month plus are allowed to take on commissions should they come about as there is no restriction on work. In the process putting them at a natural advantage in terms of competition.

As the sole earner for my household of three, my wife and son who is two, we have gone from having a normal life, where our mortgage gets paid, as do all our taxes and bills, to having to scrape by, with only one thing on the horizon, big decisions on whether we can afford out mortgage long terms on such a dramatic drop of income.

I am not asking the government for an advantage, just parity. So that we too can survive this uncertain time and pickup where we can when it is over. I implore the government to look closer at what can be done to include those in my position, for many are suffering.

Thank you,

Simon Way

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