

To:
The Right Hon Theresa May MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

Dear Prime Minister

We are writing to ask you to change the eligibility criteria for Shared Parental Pay to include self-employed parents. This was raised in last week's Prime Minister's Questions by Tracy Brabin MP, and you promised to look into the matter further.

Self-employed parents and adopters are currently not eligible for Shared Parental Pay (ShPP). The system of Maternity Allowance for the self-employed places the entire burden of childcare onto the mother, and offers no paternity or shared parental benefit for self-employed fathers or same-sex partners wanting to share childcare.

Self-employed mothers claiming Maternity Allowance have none of the legal protections afforded to employees when they go on maternity leave, so the flexibility to share childcare and stop and start their maternity pay in order to maintain their business becomes even more crucial. We believe that in 2017 gender-equality is a fundamental right, not an optional extra reserved for those in traditional employment.

With the 4.8 million self-employed people in the UK (15% of the workforce) only expected to increase, the number of families affected is significant.

We would like to see ShPP implemented for all self-employed parents, as it would allow self-employed men and women the flexibility to successfully run their businesses and care for their families. As ShPP is paid at the same rate as Maternity Allowance, and there would be the same number of qualifying maternities, we do not envisage there being a significant cost increase.

We look forward to your response

Yours,

Rushanara Ali MP (*Bethnal Green and Bow*)

David Arnold, Film Composer

Vick Bain, CEO, BASCA

Guy Berryman, Musician, Coldplay

Tracy Brabin MP, Shadow Minister for Early Years (*Batley and Spen*)

Joeli Brearley, Founder, Pregnant Then Screwed

Kevin Brennan MP, Shadow Minister for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (*Cardiff West*)

Christine Brown, Director of External Affairs, Help Musicians UK

Jonny Buckland, Musician, Coldplay

Tim Burton, Film Director

Will Champion, Musician, Coldplay

Tom Chaplin, Musician, Keane

Bambos Charalambous MP (*Enfield, Southgate*)

Eos Counsell, Musician, Bond

Cameron Craig, Executive Director, Music Producers Guild

Rosie Duffield MP (*Canterbury*)

Michael Dugher, CEO, UK Music

Anna Ehnold-Danailov, Director, Parents In Performing Arts

Derek Frey, Film Director

Paul Epworth, Music Producer

Olga FitzRoy, Founder, Parental Pay Equality

James Frith MP (*Bury North*)

Preet Gill MP (*Birmingham, Edgbaston*)

Elsbeth Hanson, Musician, Bond

Ed Harcourt, Musician & Music Producer

Emma Hardy MP (*Kingston upon Hull West and Hessle*)

Ayesha Hazarika, Advisor to BPI and Political Commentator

Helen Hayes MP (*Dulwich and West Norwood*)

Sharon Hodgson MP, Shadow Minister for Public Health (*Washington and Sunderland West*)

Richard Hughes, Musician, Keane

Dr Rupa Huq MP Shadow Minister, Home Office, Crime Prevention (*Ealing Central and Acton*)

Diana Johnson MP (*Kingston upon Hull North*)

Afzal Khan MP, Shadow Minister for Immigration (*Manchester Gorton*)

Kate Kinninmont MBE, Chief Executive, Women In Film & TV (UK)

Caroline Lucas MP, Co-Leader of the Green Party (*Brighton Pavilion*)

Shabana Mahmood MP (*Birmingham, Ladywood*)

Laura Marling, Musician

Chris Martin, Musician, Coldplay

Giles Martin, Music Producer

Seema Malhotra MP (*Feltham and Heston*)

Anna McMorrin MP (*Cardiff North*)

Catherine Morrissey, Women's Officer, IWGB

Gerry Morrissey, General Secretary, BECTU

Christine Payne, General Secretary, Equity

Jess Phillips MP (*Birmingham, Yardley*)

Jo Platt MP (*Leigh*)

Lucy Powell MP (*Manchester Central*)

Jesse Quin - Musician - Keane / Mt. Desolation / While The World Sleeps

Ellie Reeves MP (*Lewisham West and Penge*)

Cassie Raine, Director, Parents In Performing Arts

Faisal Rashid MP (*Warrington South*)

Tim Rice-Oxley - Musician - Keane / Mt. Desolation

Naz Shah MP (*Bradford West*)

Sam Smethers, CEO, Fawcett Society

Laura Smith MP (*Crewe and Nantwich*)

Alex Sobel MP (*Leeds North West*)

Jo Stevens MP (*Cardiff Central*)

Jo Swinson MP, Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat Party & Foreign Affairs Spokesperson (*East Dunbartonshire*)

Alison Thewliss MP (*Glasgow Central*)

Horace Trubridge, General Secretary, Musicians Union

Chuka Umunna MP (*Streatham*)

Helen Walbey, Diversity Policy Unit Chair, Federation of Small Businesses

Stephen Warbeck, Film Composer

David Warburton MP, (*Somerton and Frome*)

Tom Watson MP, Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, Shadow Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (*West Bromwich East*)

Gay-Yee Westerhoff, Musician, Bond