Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP,
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

15 May 2019

Dear Karen,

I am writing in my capacity as acting Chair of the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee.

The Historical Institutional Abuse consultation process has now concluded. It is clear from the consultation response report that the Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service has written to you requesting that, in the absence of a Northern Ireland Executive, you progress the legislation through Parliament. Our Committee was therefore deeply disappointed to learn that victims of historical institutional abuse have been informed that the issue of compensation will not be acted on but will be pushed into the ongoing talks process.

In our meeting with you on 27 March, you committed to look at the recommendations of the consultation response as a matter of urgency. In writing to us on 26 March, you committed to consider the urgent next steps if there was no Executive or Assembly. There is no restored Executive or Assembly and no indication of when there will be. We are concerned that by pushing this important matter into the talks process it creates a long and unnecessary delay.

It is not the case that legislation cannot be taken through Westminster. Only a few weeks ago, parliament passed legalisation to make changes to RHI scheme payments under emergency procedures. This also followed a consultation process and a recommended way forward. We understand that legislation is ready, and we hope you will bring it forward as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Hoey MP
Acting Chair, Northern Ireland Affairs Committee