



Work and Pensions Committee

House of Commons | London | SW1A 0AA

Tel 020 7219 5831 Email workpencom@parliament.uk Website

www.parliament.uk/workpencom

12 December 2018

Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP
Secretary of State for Work and Pensions
Department for Work and Pensions

Dear Amber,

“Managed migration” to Universal Credit

On 22 November we published our report on the Government’s plans for moving people claiming existing benefits to Universal Credit. At that stage, we were not yet persuaded that the Regulations—though better than the original version—contained adequate safeguards for vulnerable claimants. We called for a delay to allow for further scrutiny by the Social Security Advisory Committee (SSAC) and others.

We have not yet seen any further advice that the SSAC may wish to offer. But we have had the benefit of a report from the House of Lords Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee Sub-Committee B (HLSLCB). That Committee shares many of our concerns about the Government’s proposals.

The HLSLCB concludes that Parliament has been given “insufficient detail to make an informed decision on DWP’s proposals”. Where the Committee has been able to reach a view, it expresses concern about the DWP’s capacity to deliver “managed migration”—and in particular identifies a risk that vulnerable claimants will be forced into hardship or debt by the Government’s approach.

We are writing to propose a way forward.

The Department has argued that it is necessary for Parliament to approve these Regulations before the end of this year in order to provide transitional payments to people who are currently receiving Severe Disability Premium (SDP).

The HLSLCB was not persuaded by the Government’s argument that “the various elements [of the Regulations] are “inextricably linked””. The HLSLCB suggests instead that “it would be better for DWP just to seek legislative cover for the pilot, which it, in any event, describes as a distinct phase. Information from that exercise could then be used to reassure the House of DWP’s operational capacity and the welfare of the transferred claimants, before further powers to migrate the main group are granted.”



Work and Pensions Committee

House of Commons | London | SW1A 0AA

Tel 020 7219 5831 Email workpencom@parliament.uk Website

www.parliament.uk/workpencom

We agree and propose the following:

- that the Government withdraw the Draft Universal Credit (Managed Migration) Regulations 2018 currently before Parliament;
- that it lay, as a matter of urgency, Regulations to provide only for transitional payments to people receiving Severe Disability Premium and for the 'pilot' phase of managed migration;
- that it only seek parliamentary consent to the further powers needed for the next stage of managed migration once it has demonstrated to Parliament, on the basis of the lessons learned from the pilot phase, that it has the necessary capability and safeguards in place.

With best wishes and we look forward to hearing from you,

Rt Hon Frank Field MP
Chair

Heidi Allen MP

Cc. Rt Hon Lord Cunningham of Felling, Chairman of the House of Lords Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee (Sub-Committee B)