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Rt Hon Frank Field MP  
Chair  
Work and Pensions Committee  
House of Commons  
London  
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10<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Dear Frank

### Historic welfare debt collection

At the Work and Pensions Select Committee session last month, you asked if I could provide assurances that today's welfare claimants are not being presented with historic debts that Parliament had previously written-off.

Having consulted with my officials, I am pleased to confirm that the Department does not chase debts once they have been written-off. Once a debt has been written-off, it is zeroed on our systems to ensure no active recovery can take place. The only exception where we might seek to recover previously written-off debt is where debt attributed to official error later transpires to be the result of fraud. In such cases we reverse the write-off and pursue recovery.

I hope this answers your question satisfactorily.

Best wishes,  


**Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP**

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WORK AND PENSIONS