

- Independent Offices -

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**From:** [redacted]  
**Sent:** 25 May 2009 11:33  
**To:** Inquiry  
**Subject:** Submission

E301

Dear Sir, etc

Please see detailed below my suggestions for amending the allowances that are given to MPs and Ministers.

#### Ministers

Ministers who are sacked from their ministerial position should not receive a minister's salary for an additional three months

Ministers who have grace and favour accommodation cannot claim a second home allowance – subject to the details below

#### MPs and the House of Lords

The assumption has been made that being an MP is a full time job, and one that requires them to be in Westminster 3-4 days a week on parliamentary business.

However, I challenge this assumption as MPs are able to fulfil ministerial duties in addition to their day to day obligations for their constituents. In addition many MPs hold other paid employment.

Given this I am of the opinion that MPs pay and certain allowances should be pro-rata based on the number of other paid positions held. This should be the case for MPs who become Ministers, and that reduction in salary should be used to provide additional salary allowance to employ more staff so that their constituents still receive the appropriate level of service.

Further more the suggestions below depend in part on whether the government provides accommodation in London for MPs that require it; suitable locations should be in deprived areas of London; such as the Olympic village, Tower Hamlets or Peckham. If the MP also conducts other business whilst in London then part of the cost of accommodation will become a taxable benefit. If Government does provide such accommodation, and assuming that the second home can only be in London then additional allowances to cover the costs of having to maintain a second home will not be required. As such many of the points detailed below will not be relevant.

On an annual basis all MPs and Lords (and all parliamentary candidates at elections) should have to disclose their income and from whom they were employed on annual basis.

1. As a rule the main home is designated in their constituency
2. As a rule the second home only be in London
3. No flipping of second homes
4. No London MP or any MP that their constituency is within 90 minutes commute from Westminster should be able to claim a second home allowance
5. MPs cannot employ relatives; and provision should be made to ensure that they do not employ relatives of fellow MPs to get around this rule
6. Expenses claimed must be wholly exclusively and necessary for their parliamentary duties (i.e. no luxury TVs or food)
7. MPs should not benefit from any capital gain from property that has been partly financed by

the tax payer.

8. If an MP is newly elected then some temporary financial provision (max 2 years) should be provided so that they can live in their constituency.
9. No double claiming of allowances by Husband/Wife and or partners of MPs.
10. Limited free travel to and from constituency (Max 52 times a year)
11. No free travel for family members, or if free it is a taxable benefit and limited to a fixed number of trips
12. Attendance rule - i.e. second home allowance is reduced if you do not attend Parliament for a given number of times
13. Government to provide accommodation in London (i.e. Olympic village, Peckham or Tower Hamlets).
14. Scrap the re-settlement allowance
15. Reduce the wind-up allowance, and it must be based on actual expenditure
16. Scrap the Communications allowance
17. Tier the Incidental expense Allowance and the Staff allowance to the needs of the constituency. i.e. some MPs may need more money to provide a good service to their constituents and some not
18. Change their pension scheme to a defined contribution scheme
19. MPs cannot vote on their terms and conditions
20. Control over the management of Expenses is taken away from the Speaker of the house and given to an independent body such as the audit office.
21. All expense claims made should be published annually

In order to restore confidence in Parliament it is imperative that criminal proceedings is taken against MPs and members of the House of Lords who appear to have committed fraud by manipulating their expenses and or tax returns. In addition at the next general election no MP that retires or is not elected should be able to claim the resettlement allowance, and can only claim the winding-up allowance against the receipts for legitimate expenditure. None of which should be paid to relatives.

Finally I am of the opinion that all MPs should repay amounts claimed, since the last general election (including those that have resigned in this period) where it cannot be justified that it complied with the wholly, exclusively and necessary for their parliamentary duties, together with a penalty equal to 50% of the amounts that was claimed.

Kind regards

J Storey

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