

**Still Anjna - Independent Offices -**

**From:** Rick Fawley [rickfawley@supanet.com]  
**Sent:** 09 June 2009 23:15  
**To:** Inquiry  
**Subject:** Re: Submission on Standards in Public Life - REVIEW OF MP'S EXPENSES

E671

Gloria,

You have my permission to use this submission however you think fit. I stand by it so feel free to sign it from me and make all that data available publically.

Let me know if ou need anything else.

Regards,

Rick

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [inquiry@standards.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:inquiry@standards.x.gsi.gov.uk)  
**To:** [rickfawley@supanet.com](mailto:rickfawley@supanet.com)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 09, 2009 2:53 PM  
**Subject:** RE: Submission on Standards in Public Life - REVIEW OF MP'S EXPENSES

Dear Mr Fawley

Thank you for your submission to the Committee's inquiry into MPs' expenses. I have passed this on to the Chair and Committee members for them to consider.

To ensure that our inquiry is conducted with the utmost transparency, we are committed to publishing all submissions we receive from public office holders, such as MPs, and organisations unless there are genuine arguments for confidentiality, or they appear to be defamatory.

The Committee is also keen to publish all the evidence it receives from members of the public. Could you please confirm that you are willing for your submission to be published together with your name and details of the town/city in which you live. The Committee will not publish your submission without your consent. If you are willing to give your consent, please contact the Committee by email or in writing.

Kind regards

Gloria Durham  
Committee on Standards in Public Life  
Room 3.4  
35 Great Smith Street  
London SW1P 3BQ  
Tel: 0207 276 2589  
Fax: 0207 276 2585

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Rick Fawley [mailto:rickfawley@supanet.com]  
**Sent:** 26 May 2009 00:13  
**To:** Inquiry  
**Subject:** Submission on Standards in Public Life - REVIEW OF MP'S EXPENSES

Dear Sir or Madam,

I care about our democracy, and would like to accept your invitation to ordinary citizens to make a submission for consideration in your review into Standards in Public Life - REVIEW OF MP's EXPENSES.

I fully accept that there will be more qualified reports than my own, and I would submit that I am a disappointed citizen rather than an angry one. In the true spirit of politics I want to be able to feel that I can endorse what you're doing, because I seek to contribute towards it rather than sit in judgement awaiting it's publication.

I feel this is a genuine opportunity to reform something and make it fit for the next 100 years.

Regards and Good Luck,

Rick Fawley

Sheffield

[Sheffield Hillsborough, moving to Sheffield Hallam at the next election, as a result of boundary condition changes]

Dear Committee,

As a private individual I should like to make a submission regarding MP's expenses and allowances.

I am an ordinary citizen and a member of a mainstream Political Party, formerly but not recently an activist. My concern regards the impact upon political engagement of the populous.

As well as tarnishing the reputation of our politicians, our democracy has also been weakened. Newspaper reports suggest widespread political abdication. Ordinary citizens feel powerless to act as it appears to be the choice of the political parties, the constituency associations and so on as to who stays and who goes. The involvement of the electorate is deferred, creating a damaging feeling of disempowerment, with anger turning to apathy. Errant candidates are endorsed or go unpunished for seemingly political reasons.

Growth in independent candidates may actually support the status quo, with voters encountering option fatigue at the ballot boxes. This may return the candidates they seek to reject by splitting the protest vote, which is as dangerous to our democracy as increased monitoring is a danger to our liberty.

Ordinary citizens need to look at this as an opportunity for change.

#### **Travel and a Second Home 'I have to be in two places to do my job'**

These items are entwined. The distance of an MP's constituency to Westminster is not so much a factor as the length of the commute and, politically, the proportion of their constituents who make that journey.

If that journey is less than one hour by the best means, the MP should receive a London weighting and pay for their travel expenses out of it.

MP's outside that who have a particular proportion of their constituents commuting anyway should not be able to claim for a second home, but should be able to claim either free public transport, or have a car, using the same tax rules as other company car holders.

For other MP's, they should all have grace and favour accommodation paid for directly without any reference to the MP. This might pay for itself in 10 years. They should also have a choice of either a company car, or free public transport as above. For MP's who need flights, they should be allocated a set number per year.

Ultimately this means no additional costs allowance, but possibly a house and a car are provided without reference to the MP's pocket, excepting tax liability.

#### **Office Costs, Employing Family Members and Political Activists 'People I can trust and rely on'**

Staff should be politically neutral and should understand government and party boundaries, and what they are and are not permitted to do.

Many existing staff are qualified and should be given the option of transferring onto Civil Service contracts that are centrally managed. Where qualified, they should be considered favourably.

They should automatically transfer to a new MP at election time, and be employed directly by the state. If they are tied to the constituency, they should understand the constituency, even if located in Westminster.

One of the civil service staff members should be designated as a Constituency Office Manager, and they should be responsible for office costs, not the MP.

Any existing employees who cannot work for an MP of another political affiliation, who are unqualified or over paid in relation to other staff, and those who are past retirement age should be released.

The government should be free to redeploy qualified personnel between constituencies to allow for professional growth and development. All need job descriptions and person specifications that should be written and maintained centrally.

The communications allowance should be scrapped. Reasonable printing should be requestable centrally where the content can be checked for political bias. Internet should be used wherever possible.

#### **MP's Salaries 'We need to attract the right people'**

It's a public perception that the majority of MP's earned less in private life than they earned in public life, hence the argument regarding MP's salaries is perceived to be disingenuous. The expectation is also that they will earn less once they have returned to private life, unless they accept consultancies or directorships that exploit their political contacts.

A five year or full parliamentary session ban on seeking or accepting consultancies should help to reassure members of the sincerity of former politicians.

Paying MP's the salary they earned the year they entered the House for their first parliamentary term, capped for very high earners, would ensure no MP turns away from politics because they cannot afford the pay drop. It would also ensure that those whose earning potential is way below that of a parliamentarian do not hide behind that argument. Only after an MP is re-elected should they qualify for the MP's pay scale. If they leave the House after only one term, they should have a legal right to their old job back, or compensation if it's unavailable. If they stay for more than one, they forfeit that right.

The second term and beyond MP's payscale should be a particular multiple of the average salary of the constituency.

#### **General Changes**

Fixed terms for MP's, Prime Ministers and Governments would prevent the growth of self interested career politicians. They would also prevent the distraction of Parliament arguing about when the next election should be. Dissatisfaction in parties perceived to be clinging on for grim death would end, as election dates would be set in statute.

The public and politicians would understand exactly when the days of reckoning are. The economy would be stronger as business would be able to plan. MP's would naturally spend more time in their constituencies in the final year of a parliament.

Politicians given a maximum of three 4 year terms would be not become disconnected from their constituents by years of parliamentary privilege, while sat in safe seats. Members of the public would feel more able to influence policies if they felt there was genuine movement and opportunity for new politicians to challenge old ones.

Allow the House to pass a vote of no confidence in a particular MP that triggers a by election.

Allow anyone to claim back their first year's membership of a political party.

Remove the exit payments for politicians, unless they have served 3 full terms and are retiring.

Yours respectfully,

Rick Fawley, Sheffield