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Baroness Lister  
House of Lords  
London  
SW1A 0PW

10<sup>th</sup> November 2022

Dear Baroness Lister,

### **Universal Credit (Transitional Provisions) Amendment Regulations 2022**

Thank you for your insightful contributions to the debate on the Regret Motion tabled by Baroness Sherlock to discuss The Universal Credit (Transitional Provisions) Amendment Regulations 2022. This motion was discussed in the House on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> October, and I undertook to write to Peers to respond to any question I was unable to respond to during the debates.

During the debate you asked about the point made by The Social Security Advisory Committee (SSAC) regarding the need to monitor the impact of the declining ratio of staff to claimants during the discovery phase and specifically you asked when moving on to the next phase of implementation [how would the Department] ensure that the declining staff/claimant ratio is monitored?

We have begun to move small, controlled volumes through the process of managed migration. This is the process of writing to existing legacy benefit claimants and mandating them to make a claim to Universal Credit. Key to the success of the next phase of implementation (as with the full geographical rollout of Universal Credit, which was completed in 2018) is planning to ensure that we have the right number of people, with the right skills to deliver the increase in volume of Universal Credit claims; this is already underway.

You also asked about transitional protection regarding the difference uprating could have to the amount of benefits received if a claim was made before or after the uprating date. Specifically, would this be made clear to those due to migrate during this period.

You will appreciate, with decisions on uprating benefits being considered, it is not possible to provide further comment on this at present. However, it may be helpful to understand the principle of transitional protection, and how it will erode over time, including due to the uprating of the underlying elements of UC.

Transitional protection is not intended to be an indefinite increase in a UC claimant's entitlement, or to permanently replicate legacy benefit awards, it is intended to protect benefit entitlement levels at the point claimants move to the new benefit system. This provides those required to move time to adjust to the new benefit system. It is a long-standing principle that transitional protection will be reduced as other elements of the benefit are increased or awarded anew.

Over time a claimant's overall benefit entitlement will, in line with the principle of equality of treatment between claimants gradually align with the entitlement of other new Universal Credit claimants in the same circumstances. For example, those who are required to claim benefit for the first time and those legacy benefit claimants who are required to claim UC following a change of circumstance.

As for including a warning in the migration notice, we would avoid giving any standard or blanket advice to claimants when informing them they need to migration. Each claimant has differing circumstances, and it is therefore not necessarily assured that a delay to moving to UC will therefore be in their best interest, as many claimants would be better off claiming UC. Having received a migration notice, those with questions or concern about moving to UC, can seek help and support from the contacts included in the migration notice.

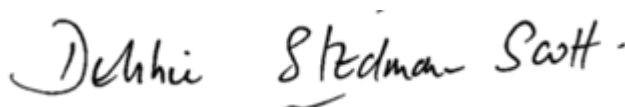
Also, you asked 'if there may be a case for pausing the exercise prior to any April uprating, to ensure that no one loses out unfairly'.

A pause would not address any impacts on transitional protection for those individuals who have already migrated to UC since resumption of managed migration in May 2022, which would mean different and potentially unfair treatment of claimants.

Thank you once again for contributing to what was a constructive and well-timed debate, I look forward to working with you further on these issues in future. I will place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

I will place a copy of this letter in the House library.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debbie Stedman Scott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the name "Stedman".

**BARONESS STEDMAN-SCOTT**  
**MINISTER FOR WORK AND PENSIONS (LORDS)**