

The Lord Fox and The Baroness Penn
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Dear Lord Fox and Baroness Penn,

Employment Rights Bill: Parental Leave Review

Thank you for your contributions to the committee stage debate on the Employment Rights Bill on 13 May, on the important topic of parental leave and the Government's planned review. I appreciate your interest and engagement on this topic, and I am pleased to write with further information.

The Government is committed making sure that parents receive the best possible support to balance their work and home lives. We understand that the parental leave system needs to be improved. That is why 'Make Work Pay' committed to undertake a review, to better support working families. We have taken on board the concerns eloquently raised by Noble Lords during the debate.

I am pleased to confirm that planning for the review is well underway across Government, and to provide some more information about the scope and timelines.

The review will consider all current parental leave entitlements and will take a system-wide view of how they operate. It will establish objectives for the system, to reflect the needs of Great Britain's modern economy; this has been lacking as the framework of entitlements has evolved over time. I can confirm the review will look at paternity leave and pay, and the length of leave available to fathers and partners – which was an area of interest and concern during our debate.

As set out in the Next Steps to Make Work Pay document, the Parental Leave Review will proceed separately to the Employment Rights Bill measures to make Paternity Leave and Parental Leave 'day one' rights, although it will certainly take those changes into account in its consideration of the system as a whole. We do not anticipate the findings of the review being available during the Parliamentary passage of the Bill, however we will keep Noble Lords updated with progress. I look forward to setting out more detail regarding the review before the summer break / recess, this will include publishing the terms of reference.

I am copying this letter to all Noble Lords who spoke in the debate. I am also depositing a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Leong', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lord Leong CBE
Lord in Waiting (Government Whip)