



# A Fair Deal for Agency Workers



I know that working through an agency can be a convenient route into work for many people, but I have it doesn't mean that they shouldn't be treated with 'fairness and respect' by unscrupulous agencies.

This week the Government agreed a deal between employers and unions that will see all agency workers in the UK receive equal treatment after 12 weeks employment.

The agreement reached will give increased protection to agency workers and guard against unfair wage undercutting.

By working with employers we have made sure that we do not put jobs at risk or cut off a valuable route into employment.

As you know I think it is important for me to keep you up to date with what the Opposition say about measures like this.

In this case, David Cameron claims he is in favour of rights for working people but won't tell people that the Tories have opposed increasing protection for agency workers.

This announcement builds on Labour's existing help for families - including

- ✓ 9 months paid maternity leave for new mums;
- ✓ A right to paternity leave for all dads;
- ✓ Surestart and free childcare for three and four year olds;
- ✓ The childcare element of the Working Tax Credit that pays up to £140 a week for one child and £240 a week for two or more; and
- ✓ The National Minimum Wage.

And, as I mentioned in last week's 'News from Westminster', the Labour government has also announced that it will extend the right to request flexible working to parents of children up to age 16 - benefiting an extra 4.5 million parents.

On this issue David Cameron is no different - he says he supports flexible working but he actually voted against it.

## **Supporting our Armed Forces**

Our Armed Forces are the best in the world, putting their lives at risk to protect Britain and promote peace around the world. The soldiers I meet are a credit to themselves, their families and their country.

This week the Labour Government welcomed a report into how the British public can better express its support and gratitude for our servicemen and women.

The report recommends the introduction of an annual Armed Forces and Veterans Day, greater support for homecoming parades and strengthening and expanding cadet organisations in schools. The Labour Government has already implemented some of the report's recommendations and is working on taking other recommendations forward.

I am committed to supporting our veterans and raising awareness about their achievements. This Labour Government was the first government to appoint a Minister for Veterans Affairs, extended the Veterans Badge to include all those who have served in our Armed Forces and have invested more money than ever in supporting veterans.

This week's report marked another step forward.

## **Better Services For Older People**

These days we are living longer, and that is something we should celebrate, but it is important that we help older people to live not just longer lives - but healthier, more independent lives.

The Government this week outlined measures to make this a reality and our aim is to make quality of life stretch right to the end of life.

I want to ensure that older people in Corby and East Northants see their local services improve, and I want it to be made easier for them to access and use these services.

## **Liberals Would Hit Families Hard By Cutting Tax Credits**

I was disappointed to hear Liberal Leader Nick Clegg's comments on public spending earlier this week.

On Tuesday he pledged to "scale back" tax credits, which would hit families hard and increase the number of children living below the poverty line.

And, after backing Labour's spending plans just a few months ago, he is now planning to cut public services.

In his speech he said, "public money can be spent much better if, for example, we radically decentralise the NHS, or scale back Tax Credits."

It is yet another clear indication that only Labour can be trusted to support low-income households.

## **Getting Young People 'Back on Track'**

This week Ed Balls, Labour's Children's Secretary, published 'Back on Track' - a White Paper which sets out a major overhaul to how some of society's most troubled and challenging young people are educated.

We are determined to ensure that excluded youngsters do not end up in crime or unemployment.

The White Paper will ensure they receive the support they need to turn around their behaviour and get their learning back on track.

### **Contact me:**

**If you would like more information on anything in this week's News From Westminster, please contact me at: [hopep@parliament.uk](mailto:hopep@parliament.uk)**