



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

May 2020

THE CORONAVIRUS JOB RETENTION SCHEME

Constituents have contacted me to support campaigns that call for further reform to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) so as to widen its scope. I have fed these into the Government, and have been assured that every such request is given careful consideration and that all measures in place are kept under constant review.

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is a UK-wide scheme announced on 20 March to pay a grant to any business for each worker they identify as furloughed so that they can remain employed but not be expected to work. Colleagues at the Treasury assure me that they have done all they can to make sure the scheme covers as many employees as possible.

HM Treasury extended the initial cut-off date to allow more employees to receive support through the scheme. Employers can now claim through the CJRS for furloughed employees that were employed and on their PAYE payroll on, or before, 19 March 2020. This allows as many people as possible to be included by going right up to the day before the announcement, and balances the risk of fraud that exists as soon as the scheme became public. Fundamentally, if HMRC have no record of employment before the scheme was launched, there are limited ways to check genuine claims and limit widespread fraud.

On 12 May 2020, the Chancellor announced that the Scheme will continue until the end of October, with new flexibility introduced from August to get employees back to work. This includes furloughed workers being able to return to work on a part-time basis, with employers being asked to pay a percentage towards the salaries of furloughed staff. I believe this extension is a crucial step in supporting employees and businesses during the current pandemic.

The scheme is available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wages-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>. I would be pleased to hear direct from constituents who want to register specific points about the CJRS that I have not covered in this general statement.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Conor Burns', with a horizontal line underneath.