



**WRDA Letter to all Northern Ireland Members of Parliament
against the Planned Cut to Universal Credit**

17th August 2021

Dear Member of Parliament,

I am writing on behalf of the Women's Resource and Development Agency with concern about the upcoming £20-a-week cut to Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit. This will be the biggest overnight cut to the basic rate of social security since the Second World War and we urge you to please take action against this.

This cut is going to have a huge impact on the lowest-income families across Northern Ireland, both in and out of work. WRDA and the Women's Policy Group have consistently campaigned against this cut, through evidence-based recommendations in our comprehensive [COVID-19 Feminist Recovery Plan](#) in both [2020](#) and [2021](#), which highlight the disproportionate economic impact of the pandemic on women, particularly in relation to ongoing poverty and austerity.

The pandemic has shown us that life is full of things we can't plan for. Social security must be strong enough for us all to rely on when we need a lifeline. The decision to increase Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit at the start of the pandemic was a clear recognition that payment levels were not adequate to protect families when they need it.

As we start to rebuild our society, it would make no sense at all to weaken it. This cut to Universal Credit will disproportionately impact women in Northern Ireland, who are often the poverty "shock

absorbers” in families. In addition, in the ten years leading up to the pandemic, women accounted for 86% of HMRC Tax Revenue Savings through austerity – this cut will be another devastating blow to people in Northern Ireland, in particular women, who have already been drastically impacted by the austerity regime.

I am hoping that, as an MP representing the people of Northern Ireland, you will raise these concerns about the impact of this cut on your constituency in parliament, as well as writing to the Chancellor and Ministers.

This autumn, the Government must choose. Choose to protect people when they need support, not cut them adrift. Choose a social security system that enables families to escape from poverty. Choose to open up options and opportunities for people to improve their lives.

Kind regards,

Rachel Powell

Women’s Sector Lobbyist

On behalf of:

Women’s Resource and Development Agency

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