

Subject: Re: Housing Refunds (Case Ref: LR28894)

Date: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 at 1:59:30 PM Greenwich Mean Time

From: Lloyd Russell-Moyle

To: BSU Vice President Education

Dear Ramy,

Thanks for getting in touch. Lloyd absolutely agrees students have been failed throughout this pandemic - they sent university students back to in-person learning when not only was remote learning possible, but also more safe. Many now are trapped in housing contracts in tenancies which they do not reside. Lloyd pressed that Brighton and Sussex University cancelled their hall residence fees and urged in Parliament that the Government mandate that private landlords are lenient with rent fee payments throughout the pandemic for students.

The National Union of Students (NUS) have criticised the Government for "ignoring the needs of students throughout the pandemic". They are calling for students to have a right to leave accommodation and courses without financial detriment, to have rent reimbursements for lockdown periods and for post-covid-19 investment in lifelong, funded and accessible education. Lloyd supports these calls. Lloyd knows from speaking to students that many are facing extreme financial hardship as a result of the pandemic. Many students rely on work in hospitality and similar industries to make ends meet and many have been unable to access financial support to make up the gap in incomes following the closures in those industries. Lloyd has therefore advocated for much greater financial support to be made available to people suffering financial hardship as a result of this pandemic and for the gaps in the existing schemes to be closed.

Lloyd was elected on a manifesto that recognised that "under the Tories, universities are treated as private businesses, left at the mercy of market forces, while top salaries soar and students pay more for less" and committed to "end the failed free-market experiment in higher education, abolish tuition fees and bring back maintenance grants." Lloyd remains committed to those policies because I believe the marketisation of higher education fails to deliver for students, staff and our wider society.

In Parliament Lloyd has supported a motion expressing concern about the Government's failure to act swiftly on warnings from the UCU and scientific advisors about the risks of face-to-face teaching during this pandemic and calling for rents to be refunded, tuition fees to be scrapped and student debt to be cancelled for good so that "young people are not punished for seeking an education". Lloyd will continue to speak out against the unfair treatment students have faced during this pandemic, and longer-term for a higher education system that serves the needs of students, staff and wider society rather than being driven by market forces.

I hope this has clarified Lloyd's support for students.

Yours Sincerely,
Policy Caseworker to LLOYD RUSSELL MOYLE MP
For Brighton Kemptown and Peacehaven

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From: BSU Vice President Education
Sent: 5 January 2021 10:03
To: Lloyd Russell-Moyle
Subject: Housing Refunds

Dear Lloyd Russell-Moyle MP,

I hope you and your loved ones are well. I want to firstly thank you for all you have done and continue to do for the

community, and for your previous support for our housing campaign back in the Spring – we really appreciated it.

As you'll be aware, the government's staggered return plans for students returning to universities has changed and students who are not on exempt practical courses are being told they should not return to campus until February, at the earliest, and potentially even later. This means those students residing in Brighton's private accommodation will not be able to access their accommodation and will continue to pay for it. I was wondering if you intend to do any work in relation to this to urge landlords to demonstrate flexibility regarding their student tenants?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Many thanks and best wishes,
[signature_1697107959]

Ramy Badrie (pronouns: he/him)
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