



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Ms Ruth Davidson MSP
Leader of the Scottish Conservative & Unionist Party
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Monday, 09 May 2016

Reference: Rape Clause

Dear Ruth,

Congratulations on your party's recent success in the Scottish Parliament elections.

The clear and consistent theme you developed during the election campaign was that your party would be a "strong opposition" for Scotland. A strong, constructive and robust opposition is to be welcomed and obviously further enriches democracy and governance in Scotland. I hope you will resist the temptation to fall into the same trap that Labour often did, which was to put up opposition simply for oppositions sake.

I would ask, however, that you ensure your "strong opposition" commitment extends beyond the confines of the Scottish Parliament and to some of your own party's most draconian policies emanating from Westminster.

Since July last year, I have been pursuing very serious concerns about your Government's proposed rape clause and two child policy for tax credits. Despite some platitudes, warm words and promises of consultation, these policies remain on the table and destined for the statute books. If implemented, these policies will put women and vulnerable families in incredibly difficult positions and could, potentially, force victims of rape to relive traumatic experiences simply to justify claiming tax credits. No-one who has any shred of decency can surely think this is the right thing to do.

The vote you received at last week's elections isn't just to lead a strong opposition in the Scottish Parliament. Arguably, you now have a stronger mandate within your own UK party and I would urge you to use it, to stand up for women and vulnerable families and urge the UK Government to scrap the rape clause and anti-family two child policy.

Will you do that?

Yours sincerely,

Alison Thewliss MP

Alison Thewliss MP

SNP Member of Parliament for Glasgow Central

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