



House of Commons  
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**Sarah Champion**  
**Member of Parliament for Rotherham**

**Immediate Release**  
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## **Sarah challenges Eric Pickles a second time on funding for Rotherham's most vulnerable families**

Sarah Champion has this week challenged Eric Pickles for a second time on the withdrawal of funding for Rotherham's most vulnerable families. The funding, known as the 'Local Welfare Assistance Fund' is designed to help people in crisis – for example, if they are on the brink of homelessness, or can't afford to eat.

Sarah wrote to Eric Pickles challenging the funding cuts. In her letter, she argued:

***"As a Member of Parliament, I have first-hand experience of how vital this support has been to some of my most vulnerable constituents. Rotherham would stand to lose almost £800,000, should central government funding be withdrawn. This money could be used to support approximately 6,250 households.***

***"I am seriously concerned that should this funding be withdrawn, RMBC would have no option but to dramatically scale back its existing commitment and potentially end support altogether."***

Local welfare assistance schemes support families in desperate situations. In Rotherham, the funding is used to help provide crisis loans via credit unions, and to help provide food to starving families, amongst other things.

Sarah has already written to Eric Pickles once before over the matter, but received no response. She commented:

***"I find it disgusting that the Minister for Communities won't even write back to me over this very serious issue. As a result of this funding being withdrawn, families in Rotherham will go hungry. It is my job to challenge that.***

***"Having funding available for families in critical situations can often help prevent a situation from spiralling out of control. It is short sighted to think that pulling this funding will save the government money. I believe that it will cost them money in the long run, as those families will no longer be saved from tipping over the edge, meaning they will be in need of more help than ever."***

**ENDS**

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