

From: Office of Margaret Mullane MP

Date: 17 February 2026

Subject: Government's proposed changes to UK immigration policy

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Thank you for contacting me regarding the Government's proposed changes to UK immigration policy.

I share your concerns about the proposed changes, particularly in relation to fairness within the settlement system and the long-established five-year route to Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) for skilled workers. Any changes to settlement pathways must be transparent, proportionate, and fair to those who have made significant contributions to our country and communities.

As soon as the proposed changes were announced, as your Member of Parliament, I wrote to the Home Secretary requesting that a 'grandfather clause' be added to the incoming changes. This would mean that those already on the five-year route to settlement would be unaffected by the proposals, with the incoming changes only applying to new routes.

This is something I continue to promote. I share concerns that this change, if implemented in full, would move the goalposts for thousands of workers, creating insecurity and undermining the ethos which underpins the new "earned settlement" model.

In response, the Department stated:

"The earned settlement model will, however, allow earlier settlement for those who meet criteria linked to contribution, integration and residence.

"Shorter pathways will remain for dependents of British citizens (five years), and safeguards will be retained for vulnerable groups, including victims of domestic abuse."

In December, I met with UNISON members from Dagenham and Rainham working in the care sector to hear directly from individuals on work visas and settlement routes. Their experiences reinforced the very real anxieties that these proposed changes are creating for care workers and their families. In the coming weeks I am also hosting members of UNISON in Parliament to discuss again their Fair Visa Campaign and what I can do to support them.

In January and February, I further escalated my concerns as a member of the Home Affairs Select Committee, where I questioned Professor Alan Manning (London School of Economics and Political Science), Nicolas Rollason (Partner, Kingsley Napley LLP), and Dr Madeleine Sumption (Director, Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford) about the implications of changes to settlement routes, particularly for care workers and other key sectors.

Through Home Affairs Select Committee I also had the opportunity to question the Home Secretary directly regarding the issue of fairness. You can see my contributions on the committee via the links below.

PANEL: <https://www.facebook.com/reel/2880692578801911/>

HOME SECRETARY: <https://www.facebook.com/reel/2050825005759006>

Please be assured that I will continue to press the Secretary of State and the Government to ensure that any proposed changes to immigration policy uphold fairness, recognise contribution, and provide clarity and security for those who have built their lives here.

Thank you again for taking the time to write to me about this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Mullane MP