



Ein cyf/Our ref: CG/PO/79/2023

Delyth Jewell MS
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

10 March 2023

Dear Delyth

Thank you for your question during plenary on 1 March when you asked about women born in the 1950s and their state pensions.

The Welsh Government has, on numerous occasions, written to the UK Government to express concerns over the impacts of the increase in the State Pension Age (SPA) for women born in the 1950s brought about as a result of the Pension Acts of 1995 and 2011. I can confirm that correspondence has not been sent by me directly. However, I am aware that Cabinet colleagues have written to the UK Government since 2016 outlining the disproportionate impact the Pension Acts have had on a number of women who had their SPA raised significantly without effective or sufficient notification. These impacts have resulted in many women enduring hardship and poverty here in Wales.

I am also aware of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman's (PHSO) investigation into the Department of Work and Pensions' communication of changes to women's SPA and the latest findings of stage two of the PHSOs report. This found that there was maladministration in DWPs communication about National Insurance qualifying years and complaint handling but that this did not lead to all the injustices claimed. A full report is expected upon completion of the investigation.

The Women against State Pension Inequality (WASPI) campaign launched a crowdfunding campaign in order to request a Judicial Review of the Ombudsman's stage two findings and I understand that their initial funding target has been reached. The WASPI campaign has confirmed that they filed a Judicial Review at the High Court on 1 March 2023. It argues that the findings of the PHSO that no injustice was suffered by the affected women was made on an irrational basis and that the findings did not take account of material considerations. There is no statutory basis for me to intervene in this Judicial Review.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The outcome of the legal proceedings is therefore awaited. I can assure you we will continue to make appropriate representation to the UK Government to ensure these women now have a fair and just outcome for the suffering they have experienced due to changes they often knew nothing about.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Mick Antoniw". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Mick Antoniw AS/MS

Y Cwnsler Cyffredinol a Gweinidog y Cyfansoddiad
Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution