

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

16th November 2018

New Constituent

RE: SMALL CLAIMS LIMIT INCREASE (PERSONAL INJURY).

Thank you for contacting me recently about the proposed increase to the small claims limit; your comments upon which I read with great interest.

I completely understand questions regarding plans to increase the small claims limit for employers and public liability personal injury claims, and I agree that it is important that the limit is not disproportionately increased. That said, the Government feels that the proposed increase to £2,000, in line with inflation since 1991 when the current limit of £1,000 was set, is appropriate and reasonable. Indeed, it seems to me that we are in agreement on the principle that it should be increased; our difference centres on the value of that figure today.

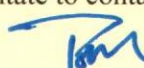
With the last increase to the small claims limit made in 1991, followed by a minor technical change to what should be included in the limit made in 1999, it has been decades since the limit was last amended. Reform of the limit is, therefore, long overdue, with the proposed increase scheduled to come into effect in April 2020. This is part of wider reforms to the small claims track limit for managing whiplash injuries and minor injuries in road traffic accidents.

Following a 2016 consultation on raising the small claims limit to £5,000, I am glad that the Government listened to concerns and instead limited the rise for claims relating to workplace injuries to £2,000, in line with inflation. The personal injury small claims track limit has been set at £1,000 since 1991, and the Government has used the *Retail Price Index* to calculate the increase to £2,000 to ensure consistency with the way such increases are dealt with by the Judicial College Guidelines.

I should also say that I agree that the small claims track is the right one for these relatively straightforward claims which do not routinely require help from a lawyer to settle. The vast majority of these claims already settle without going to court, and I welcome the fact that the Government is developing a helpful new accessible IT portal to support claimants to bring forward claims quickly and efficiently, with or without a lawyer.

I do not believe that these proposals will have a negative impact on health and safety in the workplace. All employers are required by law to report accidents and dangerous occurrences in the workplace to the Health and Safety Executive, which will continue to investigate and prosecute those at fault, irrespective of whether a personal injury claim arises from an incident. It is welcome that between 2000/1 and 2016/17 the estimated rate of self-reported workplace non-fatal injury is down by around a half, according to the Health and Safety Executive.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes, 

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE