

Dear

I am writing regarding Form NCC1, or the Rape Clause, as it is commonly known. In my opinion, a policy that forces women to relive the trauma of rape in order to apply for child tax credits is cruel and unjustifiable. Furthermore, the form's stipulation that the woman not be living with the child's father penalises women who are currently experiencing abuse.

The policy has been condemned by Engender, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Scottish Women's Aid (see <https://is.gd/j6wrvF> (Herald Scotland), <https://is.gd/v0jQCK> (The National) , <https://is.gd/vAq1hY> (Sunday Herald) who have stated that they will not provide the third party verification required for tax credit applications for children conceived as a result of rape or coercive relationship.

I see this as an indication of the policy's insensitivity to the reality of sexual violence - women who have been raped can often take a long time to disclose what has happened to them, and to expect them to weigh up the decision to disclose to strangers against the alternative of living in poverty is inhumane.

The stigmatising impact on children in families subject to the rape clause 'verification' process is yet another example of the potential damage this policy may do, and one of many aspects of this policy which has not been given adequate consideration.

There is no way to make the rape clause anything but harmful for rape survivors. The family cap - which limits tax credits to two children - is the reason the rape clause was introduced, and should be repealed.

I hope that you will consider taking steps to assist in rolling back this iniquitous legislation.

Yours sincerely,

[Name and address]