**Contacting your MP on plans to repeal ban on agency workers covering strikes**

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**Overview**

We are encouraging members to urgently write to their local MP to lobby against the government proposal to replace striking workers with agency staff. Industrial action was recently announced by RMT, the Rail Union, with rail workers and London Underground workers going on strike for several days this week. This is the biggest rail strike in 30 years. In response to this, Transport Secretary Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP suggested that agency workers could be brought in to cover striking workers.

The REC has been robust in its opposition to this move, including [writing](https://www.rec.uk.com/our-view/insights/government-and-campaigns/rec-writes-minister-ban-agency-staff-covering-strikes) to the Business Minister, Paul Scully MP, providing a briefing note to all MPs and Peers, and [media engagement](https://www.rec.uk.com/our-view/news/press-releases/rec-and-tuc-urge-government-abandon-plan-allow-agency-staff-replace-striking-workers).

Over the weekend, Business Secretary, Kwasi Kwarteng MP confirmed that legislation to repeal Regulation 7 of the Conduct Regulations is coming. A vote is expected "very quickly" so If you are willing to write to your MP you must act urgently.

A member of the REC campaigns team will be happy to join any meetings members secure with their MPs. The template below is a guide but don't be afraid to tailor it to your needs - especially if you already know your MP. If there are further questions, please get in touch with us via [policy@rec.uk.com](mailto:policy@rec.uk.com)

**Letter**

Please find a template letter below to reach out to your local MP with a view to arranging a meeting between your organisation, the REC, and the MP. You are welcome to replace the letterhead with your own and tailor it to suit your business. The letter should be emailed as a PDF attachment with covering email (example below).

You can find out who your MP is by entering your postcode [here.](https://members.parliament.uk/members/commons)

[Title][Firstname][Lastname] MP

House of Commons

London

SW1A 0AA

 [Day] June 2022

Dear [name] MP,

I am writing to urge you to vote against any proposals to repeal the ban on agency workers covering strikes. I [own / manage] [company name], a recruitment specialist in [industry], delivering employment and staffing solutions for people and businesses in your constituency.

Currently, Regulation 7 of the Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations 2003 makes it clear that agency workers cannot be used to perform the duties usually covered by a worker on strike. This is a principle that is applied internationally and is included as part of the World Employment Confederation's (WEC) Code of Conduct to which the [Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC),](https://www.rec.uk.com/) of which I am a member subscribe.

As I am sure you are aware, a strike is a dispute within a single firm. Agency workers are not employees of that firm – they are engaged by the agency. Inserting another firms’ workers into a strike situation will almost certainly inflame tensions and potentially risks the safety of the agency worker. In addition, this puts agencies themselves in a difficult position with some clients potentially putting them under pressure to help break strikes – the recent case of P&O Ferries workers showed how unfair this could be and the reputational damage it could garner for the agency and the workers involved.

There are also significant practical challenges with this policy. With demand regularly exceeding supply in our temporary labour market, especially at the moment, the chances of agency staff choosing jobs where they have to cross the picket line over those where they do not is very low. The cost of training staff to cover specialist roles is also significant. Despite the government's claims, this is not about "transferrable skills" as many of the roles involved in industrial disputes will require qualifications or skillsets.

Finally, allowing agency workers to work during a strike won’t fundamentally address the underlying issues causing the dispute. Addressing that should be the primary focus for both government and the employer involved.

If you want to discuss this in more detail, I'd be happy to arrange a meeting. I look forward to hearing from you and hope you will vote against this proposal later this week.

Yours sincerely,

[name]

[job title]

[Address]

**Email Draft**

[Subject] Vote against proposals to repeal ban on agency workers covering strikes

[Recipient]

Dear [first name],

As a constituent, I am getting in touch to urge you to vote against any proposals to repeal the ban on agency workers covering strikes. I [own / manage] [company name], a recruitment specialist in [industry], delivering employment and staffing solutions for people and businesses in your constituency.

I supply [X] number of agency staff every day, and I'm extremely concerned about the consequences this change in legislation would have on our workers and our business, both from an ethical and practical point of view. I've attached a letter outlining these concerns in more detail.

I hope you will vote against these proposals later this week. If you'd like any further information, or if a call or meeting would be helpful, please let me know and I will be happy to arrange.

Regards,

[first name]