



## Craig Whittaker MP

CALDER VALLEY

[www.craigwhittakermp.co.uk](http://www.craigwhittakermp.co.uk)

### **Response to Pregnancy and Maternity Discrimination – March 2017**

Thank you for contacting me about pregnancy discrimination.

Pregnancy and maternity discrimination is unlawful and wholly unacceptable. So, I am encouraged that the Government and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) have worked together to produce the largest independent research project of its kind to better understand this issue.

It was disappointing to see that around one in eight women reported feeling as though they had to leave work because of pregnancy or maternity leave. However, the report did show that the vast majority of employers believe it is important to support pregnant women and women on maternity leave. It is also worth noting that four in five mothers said their employer supported them during their pregnancy, and three in four of those returning to work said their needs as a new mother were met.

I am confident that the Government is able to build on this going forward. There are plans in place to work with a range of partners to promote opportunities for women, including pregnant women and new mothers. This will ensure that female talent is recognised, while also making more employers aware of their legal obligations.

On the issue of employment tribunals, the Ministry of Justice has announced a review of the introduction of fees for tribunals. This is now well under way, and will report later in the year. Following this, I will be interested to see whether the current fees or the remission scheme should be adjusted.

I am encouraged that the Government has made a clear commitment to social justice and equality for all at the heart of its mission. This work will continue throughout this Parliament, and I look forward to doing my part to support it.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP