



**Craig Whittaker MP**

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**Families in Debt (Children's Society Campaign)**

Thank you for contacting me about families in debt.

The Government is committed to introducing 'breathing space' that would give heavily indebted consumers a period of respite from enforcement action and further interest and charges, for a period of up to six weeks. Ministers ran a call for evidence to gain as much insight as possible from lenders, the debt advice sector and other stakeholders about how best to design a breathing space scheme. This consultation closed on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2018, and officials are now working on the development of the policy.

A number of steps have also been taken to reform consumer credit, including taking action on high-cost short-term credit, and a comprehensive Financial Conduct Authority study into the credit card market.

It is important to improve the help and advice available to those who may face debt problems. In 2016-17 the Money Advice Service put £45 million towards debt advice in the UK, which funded over 380,000 appointments.

Measures have also been taken to encourage household saving, including the Help to Save scheme for those on low incomes, and the new personal savings allowance.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP