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Lindsay Boswell
Chief Executive, FareShare
Unit 7 Deptford Trading Estate
Blackhorse Road
London, SE8 5HY

Sent by email only.

19 November 2020

Dear Lindsay

Re: Child poverty and the two-child cap on benefits

Like many people, I've been inspired by the work of you and Marcus Rashford to shine a light on food poverty in this country.

The Catholic Union is happy to support this work, particularly around tackling the long-term causes of child poverty, which puts a huge strain on families and the welfare of children.

As you may know, the Catholic Union is a membership organisation, which represents the views and interests of the Catholic laity in Britain. The Catholic Church has a rich history of helping those in need, particularly at times of crisis, including children in poverty.

I was delighted to see the launch of the Child Food Poverty Task Force. I know this has already made huge impact, not least in raising the profile of the recommendations in Henry Dimbleby's National Food Strategy.

Whilst I appreciate the work of the Task Force is primarily focused on getting food to children in poverty and advocating the recommendations of the National Food Strategy, I wanted to draw your attention to the long-running campaign to lift the two-child cap on benefits.

As I'm sure you know, the policy, introduced in 2017, limits the childcare element of Universal Credit and Tax Credits to two children per household. The move was widely criticised by faith groups and child poverty campaigners at the time, on the grounds that it discriminates against larger families.

We wrote to the Chancellor ahead of the Budget this year as the pandemic was beginning, and before his Summer Statement, to call for the cap to be scrapped. With household finances under growing strain and more children at risk of falling into poverty, we believe lifting the cap is now a matter of urgency.

We would welcome any support that you and the Task Force might be able to provide for this campaign. Making sure some of the most vulnerable families in this country get the support they deserve is key to ending child poverty and making sure no child in this country goes hungry.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with you and ways in which we might be able to work together in helping families most in need at this difficult time.

I'm copying this letter to Henry Dimbleby as the Independent Lead on the National Food Strategy and Vicky Ford MP as the Minister for Children and Families.

The Catholic Union of Great Britain: The Voice of Catholics in Public Life

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I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Parker', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

Nigel Parker

Director

The Catholic Union of Great Britain

Email: director@catholicunion.org.uk

cc.

- Henry Dimbleby MBE
- Vicky Ford MP