



House of Lords

London, SW1A 0PW

Tel: 020 7219 4434 Fax: 020 7219 8640

Email: [bakerk@parliament.uk](mailto:bakerk@parliament.uk)

RECEIVED  
10 JUN 2009

E570

Sir Christopher Kelly  
Chairman  
Committee on Standards in Public Life  
35 Great Smith Street  
London SW1P 3BQ

8<sup>th</sup> June 2009

In your consideration of Allowances for Members' Expenses I am not sure if your remit is to consider the Secretarial Allowance as well. If so, I would be glad to submit my own views.

I do not believe that a Member of Parliament, or indeed a Member of the House of Lords, should employ a member of their family as a secretary, a research assistant, nor a political assistant. People are being appointed who have no secretarial experience or as research assistants who have no training in research, nor are they familiar with the basic resources of research in the whole area of politics and government. This pattern of not employing family members has been adopted successfully by the United States Congress and Senate.

I do appreciate this view will not be welcomed by some MPs and Peers who currently employ relatives who do in fact work efficiently and regularly, and so I believe any change has to be phased in. What I suggest is that any arrangements presently in situ should be allowed to continue for the duration of the next Parliament but cease thereafter. The option should not be available to any MPs and Peers who enter the House at and after the next election, nor any new arrangements that are not in existence on the day you publish your report.

I understand your remit does not extend to the House of Lords, but I believe the same arrangements should be in place in both Houses.

KENNETH BAKER