

Template letter for Members to send

Dear X MP

I **own/run/manage/work** a **shop/pub/post office/office/any other business** in your constituency and am eligible to claim back rate relief through the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme.

After rent and wages, the biggest cost for a small business is its business rates bill and so the relief I am entitled to claim back is welcome. **Although I am aware of the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme, many other small business owners are not/However until very recently I was unaware the Small Business Rate Relief scheme existed and like many others would have missed out on claiming the relief that I am entitled to.** To help my business, particularly during these testing times, it would help if the relief were sent to my premises automatically, as happens in Wales.

As many small businesses are unaware of the scheme and many local authorities do not publicise it, unclaimed money in the region of £400 million per year stays at the Treasury, although it has been ear-marked by the Treasury for eligible small businesses. In the meantime, more than 50 per cent of businesses miss out on claiming back up to £2,500. During recessionary times, this cash injection could save many small businesses from laying off their staff or closing down completely, and improve the cash position of many small firms.

It is for this reason that I am writing to you, to ask you to support a Private Member's Bill, due to be debated in the House of Commons on Friday 6th March. The Bill has been tabled by Peter Luff MP, and is entitled Automatic Rate Relief (Small Businesses) Bill. The Bill seeks to help small businesses by making rate relief automatic, as is the case in other parts of the UK. Due to the benefits it would bring to small businesses it already has the support of the National Federation of SubPostmasters, Federation of Small Businesses, the Local Government Association and CAMRA among others.

I very much hope you too will be able to support this Private Member's Bill and will be available on March 6th to help it get through Parliament.