

As a member of the Energy and Climate Change Committee I have taken a particular interest in fuel poverty which affects many of the residents in the Glasgow North West Constituency I represent.

I am petitioning the Department to urgently raise the rate of the debt by which prepayment meter customers can switch their energy supplier from the current figure of £200 to £350.

After researching this issue if this was changed allowing PPM customers to switch to a cheaper supplier it would help over 200,000 customers who fall into this category to break free of the debt spiral, and be able to pay off their debt. It would end a debt mountain worth £138million in the UK. The people most likely to have this level of debt are also those most likely to live in fuel poverty. Many Glaswegians, let alone Scots, could stand to benefit if this rate was raised.

The current process, of preventing customers in debt from switching energy suppliers is widely known as debt blocking and traps PPM customers on unaffordable energy tariffs further building up debt.

I have gained widespread support for my campaign having raised this issue in the Chamber of the House of Commons on numerous occasions. The next step is for the issue to be raised with Ofgem - the energy regulator.

Should you wish any further information on this or any other matter please contact me by telephone on 0141 944 7298 or by email on jrmpoffice@btinternet.com