



Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP
Secretary of State
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Rt. Hon. Sajid Javid MP
Secretary of State
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

8 December 2015

Dear Ministers,

Tackling Labour Market Exploitation consultation

Recognising that the government has stated its commitment to tackle labour exploitation through strengthened measures, we would like to raise a number of issues that we hope you will consider in your response to the consultation and in the parliamentary debates about the proposed new measures.

As organisations representing businesses, labour providers, civil society, workers and victims of exploitation, we support a strong, licensed system for labour providers. We know how important it is to have effective government enforcement to back up business action to ensure an equitable, productive supply chain. The Gangmasters Licensing Authority (GLA), through its application and compliance inspections, has made huge improvements in employment standards in the licensed sectors and has prevented rogue gangmasters from gaining an unfair advantage over legitimate businesses by exploiting vulnerable workers.

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We believe the current review of labour enforcement provides an opportunity for Government to ensure the GLA continues to be an effective regulator. We believe it is a chance to consider whether the scope of licensing should be extended to protect vulnerable workers in other high risk sectors.

To ensure that the positive impact in the agriculture, horticulture, shellfish gathering and food processing sectors is not undone, the GLA's licensing activities need to be sufficiently resourced and the scheme should not be weakened. The focus of the GLA should continue to be protecting vulnerable workers and preventing exploitation. If the GLA's remit is expanded then additional funding will be needed to reflect these new responsibilities.

Establishing a Director of Labour Market Enforcement presents an opportunity to improve cross-agency working in this area. It is essential for the Director to work closely with the enforcement agencies and to have regular engagement with, and take on board the views of, stakeholders including businesses, labour providers, trade unions and NGOs. The Director needs to take a long-term view of enforcement priorities and prevention must be at the heart of their approach.

We recognise that the legislative timetable that has been set is very tight. However, we believe the matters that we have outlined in this letter are critical to the government achieving its goal of tackling exploitation.

We look forward to hearing from you and we would welcome the opportunity to meet to discuss these matters further.

Yours sincerely,



Peter McAllister, Executive Director
Ethical Trading Initiative



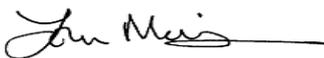
Frances O'Grady, General Secretary
Trades Union Congress



Caroline Robinson, Co-Director
Focus on Labour Exploitation



Nigel Jenney, Chief Executive
Fresh Produce Consortium



John Morrison, Executive Director
Institute for Human Rights and Business



Helen Dickinson, Chief Executive, British Retail
Consortium



David Camp, Chief Executive, Association of
Labour Providers



Ian Wright, Director General
Food and Drink Federation



Fran Hughes, Director
International Tourism Partnership



Dr. Aidan McQuade, Director
Anti-Slavery International