



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

June 2019.

Dear Constituent,

A Response to the TV Licence Fee Campaign

Thank you for contacting me about the future of the TV licence fee for pensioners.

The BBC's decision to stop funding free TV licences for all over 75s from June 2020 is very disappointing.

For most of us, television is an important connection with the outside world that informs and entertains. It also has a role in keeping people company, and this can be especially true for older people. I know from my own relatives and constituents just how important television is in their lives. This is why I was disappointed that the BBC announced the most narrowly defined option for reform of the over 75s concession.

It is important to note that this was the BBC's decision and not the Government's, after Parliament legislated to give the BBC the full responsibility from 2020. This was part of a deal the Government reached with the BBC over four years ago, which the BBC described as a good deal that provided financial stability to the organisation through inflation linked increases of the licence fee and the closure of the so-called iPlayer loophole.

As you will be aware, even under the BBC's current plans, the poorest pensioners will continue to be helped, as the BBC stated that those eligible for Pension Credit will still receive a free TV licence. However, I do not believe that this is the end of the conversation about what the BBC can do to assist older people. My colleague, the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has already met with the BBC to press them to consider further help they can provide.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alister Jack".

Alister Jack DL MP
Dumfries and Galloway constituency.