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## **“No More Loan Charge Suicides”: Powerful protest and vigil calls on Government to act to prevent further tragedies**

**A powerful protest and silent vigil took place in Westminster today calling on the Government to find a resolution to the ‘Loan Charge scandal’, before it claims more lives. Members of the Loan Charge Action Group gathered both outside Parliament and outside HMRC to send a powerful message to Treasury ministers and senior HMRC staff that they need to act to avoid more Loan Charge suicides.**

In July this year, the Treasury confirmed that a ninth person had killed themselves facing action from HMRC facing the Loan Charge, a deeply controversial piece of legislation that allows HMRC to rip up basic taxpayer protections and tax people retrospectively going back ten years.

Campaigners first of all protested outside Parliament and then held a vigil outside HMRC’s head office, to remember each of the nine people who have tragically taken their own lives as a result of the Loan Charge. In a moving tribute, nine people held a wreath and bowed their heads in silence and a bugler played a lament, in remembrance of each of the victims.

The protest comes at a time when over 70 MPs have signed an [open letter to the Prime Minister and Chancellor](#) calling for them to engage and to find a resolution. A [Loan Charge resolution](#) has been proposed by over 50 professionals from the tax and accounting sectors, calling for the Government to instruct HMRC to find a new affordable settlement opportunity to avoid many bankruptcies and further suicides.

The current Economic Secretary to the Treasury, Andrew Griffith, has previously expressed concern about the Loan Charge and HMRC’s approach to those people who are facing it. He called for an amnesty for Loan Charge victims in a debate on the Finance Bill in April 2020 *“for all but the most egregious cases of abuse in respect of the loan charge”*.<sup>1</sup>

The hope now is that more and more MPs will call on the Government to listen and that Treasury Ministers will finally engage, to avoid further suicides.

**Spokesperson for the Loan Charge Action Group, Steve Packham, said:**

“Today we sent a clear message directly to the prime minister Rishi Sunak and the Chancellor Jeremy Hunt that they need to listen and engage to find a resolution to the Loan Charge scandal, otherwise they will be responsible for more tragic and unnecessary deaths.

“Nine people have killed themselves as a result of the unfair Loan Charge. Nine families have lost loved ones due to this disgraceful retrospective tax, which is an affront to basic rights but also has been shown to be a failure as a policy.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2020-04-27/debates/C37146D2-C2C0-4146-A015-E038C1E439DA/FinanceBill?highlight=loan%20charge#contribution-591063B9-84FE-41D2-AFD6-A1B9819972F6>

“Treasury Ministers and senior HMRC Officials are well aware that without a change of approach, more people will kill themselves as well as causing hundreds of bankruptcies, which simply doesn’t make any sense. It’s high time we had some commonsense as well as some compassion and we urge the Prime Minister and Chancellor to act, engage and save lives”.

ENDS