(*If sending by post or by hand)*

[Your address]

 (*If sending by post)*

[MP’s Name]

[Address line 1]

[Address line 2]

[Address line 3]

[Post code]

[Date]

Dear [MP’s Name],

**The use of zero hours contracts in**

I am writing to you as a constituent [Please delete as appropriatet: and in my capacity as a worker on a zero hours contract / a family member of a worker on a zero hours contract] to make you aware of [Please delete as appropriate: the problems \ my concerns] about [Please delete as appropriate: this type of working arrangement / zero hours contracts]. By zero hours contracts, I refer to the legal definition in section 27A of the Employment Rights Act 1996.

[If you are on a zero hours contract or know someone on a zero hours contract, please describe your own awareness or experience of working and the impact on other parts of life.]

According to the Office for National Statistics, there are almost 1 million workers on zero hours contract, although this exceeded 1 million during the first few months of the pandemic. Although zero hours contracts are often promoted as allowing employers to adjust staffing levels to unpredictable business demand, the reality is that over one-third of all zero hours workers are on full-time hours and 62% are categorised as working part-time with a average of 20-30 hours a week.

This doesn’t look like zero hours contracts are being used to by employers to match staffing levels to business demand. Instead, it appears that there is plenty of work and employers are using zero hours contracts to get around the cost of hiring permanent staff.

A lot of zero hours workers, who lost work during the pandemic and lockdowns, were unable to benefit from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. This was not because they were not eligible but because employers decided to simply not offer work that would have ordinarily been available. With permanent members of staff, employers had a contractual obligation to pay staff. Under zero hours contracts, there is no contractual obligation to pay staff for work not technically done even though they may have effectively been working regular hours for a number of years. Zero hours staff have also not benefitted from redundancy payment.

Staff shortages are actually made worse by the use of zero hours contracts. According to recent research from Skills for Care, the turnover rate for staff on zero hours contracts in the care sector was 32.1%. The research shows that the more regular hours someone had, the less likely they were to leave their job.

To improve the working conditions of zero hours workers, Zero Hours Justice has launched an accreditation scheme for employers who either do not use zero hours contracts or use them in accordance with the following strict criteria:

* Shifts must be scheduled with at least two weeks’ notice;
* Shifts cancelled at less than two weeks’ notice must still be paid;
* Employees may request a contract with more fixed hours at any time without consequences;
* Employers must review actual hours worked annually and initiate a supportive conversation with a view to providing contract at or close to the actual hours worked as soon as they are able.

You can find out more about Zero Hours Justice campaign and its accreditation scheme from its website, <http://www.zerohoursjustice.org/our-purpose.html> and <http://www.zerohoursjustice.org/accreditation>.

I would much like to invite you to consider supporting Zero Hours Justice’s campaign to either ban unilaterally-imposed zero hours contracts or to ....

I would also like you to raise the above issues with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions or the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Yours sincerely,

[Your name]