



The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

2 July 2020

Dear Prime Minister,

The Decimation of Britain's Beauty Industry: No Laughing Matter

Britain's beauty industry contributes almost £8 billion to the UK economy, with the industry as a whole contributing a total of £28.4 billion to UK GDP. It also employs a total of 370,200 people across the entire industry, including 150,300 people employed in the service-side of the sector.

Last week in Parliament you described this economic powerhouse as 'nail bars'. Yesterday in Parliament when concerns were raised about the reopening of this sector, William Wragg MP's comments were met with loud laughter from MPs in the Chamber. We also received derogatory comments from a Government Minister for raising this issue in the Finance Bill debate. This behaviour is unacceptable and must be called out.

The beauty industry in this country is being decimated. It employs hundreds of thousands of people, many women working part time to support their family and is comprised of tens of thousands of micro businesses providing employment and an essential economic boost to communities up and down the country. Yet, beauty has been given no indication as to when it can operate again despite many other similar services such as hairdressing being allowed to open. As a result, thousands and thousands of people and businesses face financial ruin.

It is difficult to see that this is a laughing matter. Were people laughing because this is an industry which women predominate? And is it because of the government's perception that this is just an industry of 'nail bars' that you have failed to give any indication as to when the industry can reopen?

Great strides have been made to promote equality in our Parliament and our society. We would hope that this Government will not stand back and allow discrimination and prejudice to flourish. The economic powerhouse that is the beauty industry of this country and the women that work in it deserve better.

We urge this government to:

- 1) Recognise that the financial ruin of the beauty industry is no laughing matter
- 2) Immediately bring forward a plan to give this industry certainty
- 3) Take immediate action to end chauvinistic behaviour in parliament which both of the above would assist with.

We are copying this letter to the Women and Equalities Minister and the Women and Equalities Committee.

Best regard,

Two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature is a stylized 'CH' for Carolyn Harris, and the second is 'Judith' for Judith Cummins.

Carolyn Harris MP and Judith Cummins MP
Chair of the Beauty Aesthetics and Wellbeing APPG