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22 March 2022

Dear Sally,

I am writing to provide you with a draft set of regulations that we intend to lay in the Autumn in order to allow us to roll out Scottish Child Payment to under 16 year olds and to make a number of other changes to the Five Family Payments.

As per section 97 of the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018, I have enclosed a draft copy of “The Best Start Foods, Best Start Grants and Scottish Child Payment (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2022” for the Commission’s views, including an accompanying policy note. This letter has been copied to the Convener of the Social Justice and Social Security Committee and to the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee.

In addition to rolling out SCP to older children, the regulations make a number of changes to Best Start Grant. The most significant change is to introduce the ability for Social Security Scotland to auto award the Best Start Grant Early Learning and School Age Payments to clients receiving Scottish Child Payment for the child. This delivers on a commitment in the Programme for Government 2021-22. The amendments also allow certain individuals to access the higher rate of Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment.

There is an additional minor amendment that we are continuing to explore and this is highlighted in the attached policy note. We will notify the Commission as soon as we are able to confirm whether we intend to include this in the final regulations.

Following engagement with a range of stakeholders, my officials have prepared draft versions of the relevant impact assessments, and they will forward these on to your secretariat shortly. These documents include information about the stakeholders we have engaged with as we developed these regulations. Please note that these impact assessments are live documents and will continue to be updated as we gather more data and intelligence from stakeholders.

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Finally, I want to extend my thanks to the Commission for considering these regulations. As you are aware, the Five Family Payments are a key part of this government's national mission to tackle child poverty. These regulations, and your work in scrutinising them, are an important part of that work.

Best regards,



**BEN MACPHERSON**

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