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Altmann urges MPs to back 'beefed up' cold-calling amendments

Proposed changes 'not strong enough'



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Ros Altmann: "I hope the government will withdraw its own weaker amendments and back those of the Work and Pensions Committee."

Former pensions minister Ros Altmann has urged MPs to back amendments proposed to the Financial Guidance and Claims Bill by the Work and Pensions Committee to "beef up" the pensions cold-calling ban.

The House of Commons is to vote this afternoon on two amendments to the bill that were suggested by the Work and Pensions Committee last December. Altmann said the vote gives MPs the opportunity to "improve consumer protection properly".

The **first amendment would require the government** to introduce a ban on



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The second change would lead to the creation of a "guidance by default" provision that ensures individuals either receive or expressly refuse guidance before being granted access to a pension pot.

Altmann urged MPs to back the committee's proposals. "The government's amendments are not strong enough," she said. "Millions of unsolicited approaches every year have resulted in people losing their hard-earned savings in scams or frauds that could have been avoided."

Relying On ICO 'Will Not Do The Trick'

In August, the government confirmed the **ban on cold calling would be enforced by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)**. However, the former pensions minister said relying on the ICO "will not do the trick". Altmann explained the ICO tries to catch cold-callers rather than prevent them in the first place.

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not enough to protect the public," she said. "The ICO already bans cold-calls to anyone using services such as the Telephone Preference Service, but this

anyone using services such as the Telephone Preference Service, but this measure is totally ineffectual - customers whose numbers are registered still receive constant cold-calls.

"I hope the Government will withdraw its own weaker amendments and back those of the Work and Pensions Committee, otherwise, MPs will need to take the opportunity to ensure this important legislation achieves as much as it can, rather than merely providing good headlines without going far enough to protect customers properly."



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