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12 November 2021

Dear Dr Witcher,

Thank you for your scrutiny report of 05 November on The Best Start Grants and Scottish Child Payment (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2021. I want to extend my sincere thanks to the Commission for looking at the Amendment Regulations in very short time given your already packed programme of work.

The Scottish Government recognises the profound positive impact that Scottish Child Payment and Best Start Grant can have on tackling child poverty. Scottish Child Payment has already supported 108,000 children with payments worth £40 every four weeks and together with support from Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods, this provides £5,300 to low income families by the time their first child turns six.

In line with our commitment to continuously improve how Scottish Child Payment and Best Start Grant operate, and ensure the payment is received by the person who is responsible for the child, we took action to amend our regulations. This approach is in line with our determination to respond as quickly as possible to issues that come up as we roll out our delivery of benefits, ensuring they meet the needs of all the people of Scotland.

The Commission's comments on the Amendments Regulations are very helpful, and I am confident that by clarifying in legislation our policy intent in regard to competing claims, this will improve the client journey and enable us to take the action required to reduce the risk of a payment being refused for applications for those who are otherwise entitled. I am attaching a copy of the Scottish Government's response to SCoSS's recommendations which I have also copied to the Conveners of the Social Justice and Social Security Committee and to the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee.

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Thank you again for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,



**BEN MACPHERSON**

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