

iGMB

CONGRESS 2019

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**BARBARA PLANT
(President)
(In the Chair)**

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Held in:

**The Brighton Centre,
Brighton**

on:

**Sunday, 9th June 2019
Monday, 10th June 2019
Tuesday, 11th June 2019
Wednesday, 12th June 2019
-and-
Thursday, 13th June 2019**

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PROCEEDINGS

**DAY THREE
(Tuesday, 11th June 2019)**

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THIRD DAY'S PROCEEDINGS

TUESDAY, 11TH JUNE 2019

MORNING SESSION

(Congress assembled at 9.30 a.m.)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleagues. Can I call Congress to order, please? Morning, delegates. I hope you all had a good night last night. It is Tuesday, I think. I have to keep reminding myself what day of the week it is. It is only Tuesday. I have a few announcements. Please be advised that the Stroke Association are offering free blood pressure tests downstairs in the Exhibitors' area today. Please make use of this service as it will not be available after today.

Also, for the delegates coming up to speak we have installed an additional light which is ahead of the speaker's eye line. We are very aware that I can see this one but it is out of the corner of the speaker's eye. There is now one directly ahead which the speakers should be able to see when they are looking forward. There are no other announcements.

I am going to ask Helen Johnson to introduce Standing Order Committee's Report No. 4. Helen.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 4

HELEN JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee): President, Congress, Emergency Motions: the SOC has accepted three emergency motions as being in order for debate. They are:

Emergency Motion 3, Save British Steel – Save Scunthorpe, standing in the name of Midland & East Coast Region. The SOC recommends this be heard in the Industrial and Economic Policy, General Session, on Wednesday afternoon.

Emergency Motion 4, Hostile Environment Mastermind Rewarded with Queen's Honours, standing in the name of London Region. The SOC recommends that this be heard in the Political Racism and Fascism and Immigration and Migration Session on Wednesday morning.

Emergency Motion 5, Asda Retail – No to “Contract 6”, standing in the name of Yorkshire and North Derbyshire Region. The SOC recommends this be heard at the end of the afternoon session today.

Bucket Collections: Yesterday’s bucket collection by Midland & East Coast Region for Butterflies Memory Loss Support Group in Hull raised the sum of £505.60. (*Applause*) I think someone has offered to double that. (*Offers were made from the Regions*) President, Congress, I move SOC Report No.4. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen. Does anybody wish to speak on SOC No.4? No? In that case can I ask all those in favour please show. All those against? Thank you.

Standing Orders Committee Report No.4 was ADOPTED.

LOCAL GIFT

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, our first item on the agenda is the local gift. This year GMB Scotland has chosen to give the Congress Local Gift to the Glasgow Children’s Hospital Charity. Before I get the speaker for that, the speakers on the Special Report that is next also please make themselves ready. I call on Brenda Carson, GMB Scotland delegate, to say a few words about their local gift.

BRENDA CARSON (GMB Scotland): I am accepting the Congress gift on behalf of the cleft palate. A cleft palate is a gap in the lip or the roof of the mouth, the most common facial birth defect in the UK, and affects around one in 700 babies born in the UK. I have a niece, Sammy Jo, who was born with a cleft palate and has attended the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Glasgow every six months for check-ups and has had four operations. The cleft palate charity is based in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and supports not just Glasgow but Third World countries with special bottles and teats, and if it was not for the donations this vital support would not be available. Thank you. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Brenda. That is a really good cause that GMB Scotland have chosen. Thank you.

SPECIAL REPORT: DISABILITY AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Introduction

- 1.1 Disability is a trade union issue. The values of our union and our movement demand an inclusive society in which disabled people can live and work with dignity and independence, and without fear of stigma, ignorance, and discrimination.
- 1.2 One in seven workers are disabled,ⁱⁱ and disabled workers are more likely to be members of a trade union than workers who are not disabled.ⁱⁱⁱ
- 1.3 This Special Report is intended to set out an agenda by which GMB can build on our existing work and collectively advance the interests of our disabled members.

- 1.4 Around a fifth of the population is believed to be disabled. Disability can affect anyone, at any time. Disabled people are present in almost all workplaces and each branch of our union. Advancing the cause of disabled people is in all of our interests.
- 1.5 We recognise that, in 2019, disabled people continue to face unacceptable barriers in the workplace and wider society.
- 1.6 GMB endorses and adopts the social model of disability, which recognises that people are disabled by social barriers. We call for more awareness of the social model and for it to be fully implemented by the government, other public bodies, and employers.
- 1.7 GMB recognises the importance of supported employment models and supported businesses. We celebrate the role that disabled workers' co-operatives and other genuine supported businesses are playing in improving the lives of disabled workers. In line with the existing policy of the union, GMB supports the creation of a new supported employment network, backed by public funding, that learns from the strengths and weaknesses of the Remploy model.
- 1.8 This CEC Special Report has been written in response to a motion submitted by activists to Manufacturing Section Conference 2018 which called for a report on the subject to be produced for consideration by Congress.
- 1.9 It is not the intention of the CEC to use the term 'disability' in a prescriptive way. GMB recognises that the term covers a diverse range of people, and that each individual has the right to identify as disabled – or not – as they see fit.
- 1.10 Disability can cover a wide range of conditions, including but not limited to those relating to mental health, sensory conditions, physical conditions, lifelong neurological differences and other forms of hidden disabilities ranging from diabetes and Crohn's Disease to cancer, dementia, and conditions relating to industrial to industrial accidents and diseases. Many people have more than one condition that could each be considered a disability in their own right.
- 1.11 Each type of condition listed above would be worthy of a report in their own right. It is not possible in the space of one Special Report to do justice to the full diversity of challenges that disabled workers may encounter in employment and wider society. This report, therefore, aims to set out GMB response to recent policy decisions that relate to disability and supported employment, and GMB's agenda for equality for inclusion as it relates to disability.
- 1.12 Issues relating to disabled people as users of educational services fall outside of the scope of this report, as these questions were covered at least in part by the 2018 CEC Special Report on Schools and Colleges.

Background

- 2.1 Disability is as old as humanity but most of the history of disabled people in work and their trade unions remains unwritten.^{iv} GMB is proud of its historic role as a union that represents disabled people, and we are determined to celebrate the lives and accomplishments of all our members, including those who are disabled.
- 2.2 In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, disabled people were increasingly subjected to an official regime that stigmatised disability and difference. Some disabilities are lifelong; some are acquired (including through industrial accidents and diseases): all

of those who shared them were at risk of being thrown to the hard mercies of the asylum, the workhouse, and the Poor Law guardians.

- 2.3 Under the 1913 Mental Deficiency Act, thousands of disabled people were excluded from mainstream education and work and placed in ‘an institution for defectives’^v instead. The Act was not repealed until 1959. That era is still well within living memory and the legacy of those attitudes continues to cause harm till this day.
- 2.4 It took until the mid-1990s for disability discrimination legislation to be secured by the passing of the Disability Discrimination Act. The provisions of that Act were later substantially incorporated into the Equality Act. Despite these legal protections, too many disabled people continue to face unacceptable barriers in society and the world of work.
- 2.5 Economic inequality is rife, driven by very high levels of disability unemployment and pay gaps between non-disabled people and disabled people who are in work. The Equality and Human Rights Commission has warned that poverty ‘particularly prevalent’ for disabled people in the UK today and that the likelihood of disabled people being in low-paid occupations has increased in recent years.^{vi}
- 2.6 According to the Equality and Human Rights Commission, disabled men earn 13 per cent less than non-disabled men in comparable roles (for disabled women the gap is estimated at 7 per cent). The disability pay gap is believed to be particularly high for people who have mental health conditions (including depression and anxiety), developmental differences, epilepsy, conditions relating to their limbs, cardiac conditions, diabetes, and sight conditions.^{vii}
- 2.7 Most employers collect data that would allow them to report their disability pay gaps, but very few employers make this information publicly available. While we recognise that pay gap statistics do not always tell the whole story, GMB believes that transparency in this area would illuminate an important but otherwise little-discussed subject. We support the publication of disability pay gap data, on the same basis as gender and ethnicity pay gap reporting.
- 2.8 Prejudice and structural inequality remain commonplace. A quarter of people say that there is ‘a lot’ of ‘prejudice in Britain against disabled people in general.’ This figure rises to a third when disabled people themselves respond to the question.^{viii}
- 2.9 Disgracefully, one in five disabled workers has had job offers withdrawn after they disclosed their condition or conditions, according to a recent survey. One in four employers admit that they would be less likely to hire a worker who is disabled.^{ix} Seven in ten workers with a neurodivergent condition – such as ADHD, autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia – report experiencing discrimination at work.^x
- 2.10 Recorded disability hate crime is rising. The number of recorded disability hate crime incidents rose by 30 per cent between 2016/17 and 2017/18. This increase may, in part, be due to better recording and raised awareness.^{xi} Discrimination against disabled people within the criminal justice system is also under investigation.^{xii}
- 2.11 Barriers can be legal, attitudinal, and physical. Too many premises and online platforms are still inaccessible, or are poorly accessible, to disabled people. We call for all reasonable efforts to be made for buildings and other platforms to be made accessible, including for people who have hidden conditions (such as a sensory condition) which may require other types of adjustments than are typically made,

such as to noise and lighting levels.

- 2.12 Disabled people represent an important part of the wider economy. The so-called 'Purple Pound' is estimated to be worth some £250 billion a year, and there is evidence that consumers are becoming more conscious of the equalities record of companies when they make purchases.^{xiii} Utilising the value of the 'Purple Pound' may be an important part of the organising strategies against exclusionary employers of the future.

Disability under austerity

- 3.1 Since 2010, disabled people – along with women, and members of other minority groups – have borne the brunt of the Government's austerity agenda. One assessment found that austerity has cost disabled people £4,410 each on average, 9 times more than the burden placed on most other citizens.^{xiv}
- 3.2 According to the Government's own impact assessments, disabled people are more likely to be represented in the public sector than the private sector.^{xv} This means that disabled workers are disproportionately affected by job losses and restrictions on public sector pay.
- 3.3 GMB members report that, while large employers in the private and public sectors tend to talk a good game on inclusion, disabled workers are often the first to be targeted for redundancy or capability proceedings.
- 3.4 Many disabled people already face a higher cost of living than their non-disabled counterparts. Insurance premiums, transport and utility costs can all be higher: the charity Scope estimates that disabled adults incur additional costs of £583 on average per month.^{xvi} Many people's ability to meet these costs has been severely undermined by changes to the social security system.
- 3.5 Older social security payments – such as Incapacity Benefit and the adult Disabled Living Allowance – have been replaced with new schemes which have cut coverage and support. Eligibility for Employment Support Allowance is undertaken by the discredited Work Capability Assessment, which does not comply with basic medical or occupational health standards.
- 3.6 New recipients have had their entitlements raided, such as through the abolition of the Work Related Activity Component of Employment Support allowance (worth £29.05 a week). Other schemes (such as the Independent Living Fund) have been closed to new entrants.
- 3.7 The Government has rightly been accused of creating – in the words of the former head of the Parliamentary watchdog – a 'hostile environment'^{xvii} for disabled social security recipients. Almost six thousand people have died in the last decade within six months of being declared to be 'fit to work' following a Work Capability Test.^{xviii}
- 3.8 The Equality and Human Rights Commission has warned that 'that social security reforms introduced by successive UK Governments since 2010 are having a particularly negative, disproportionate and cumulative impact on the rights to independent living and an adequate standard of living for disabled people.'^{xix}
- 3.9 GMB believes that people are more understanding and compassionate than some politicians, who mistake headlines in the right-wing press for public opinion, realise.

When asked, an overwhelming majority want to see increasing spending on the social security safety net for people who cannot work, and only a very small number of people want to see reduced spending.

Would you like to see more or less government spending than now on benefits for disabled people who cannot work?

Question	%
Spend more or much more	61.3
Spend the same as now	34.7
Spend less or much less	2.9
Don't know	1.1
Refused to answer	0.1
Source: British Social Attitudes Survey 2015	

3.10 While the worst assaults on the social security system have taken place under Conservative-led governments, and although the implementation of pre-2010 policies have been changed by Conservative Ministers, it should not be forgotten that the Work Capability Assessment was designed under Labour.

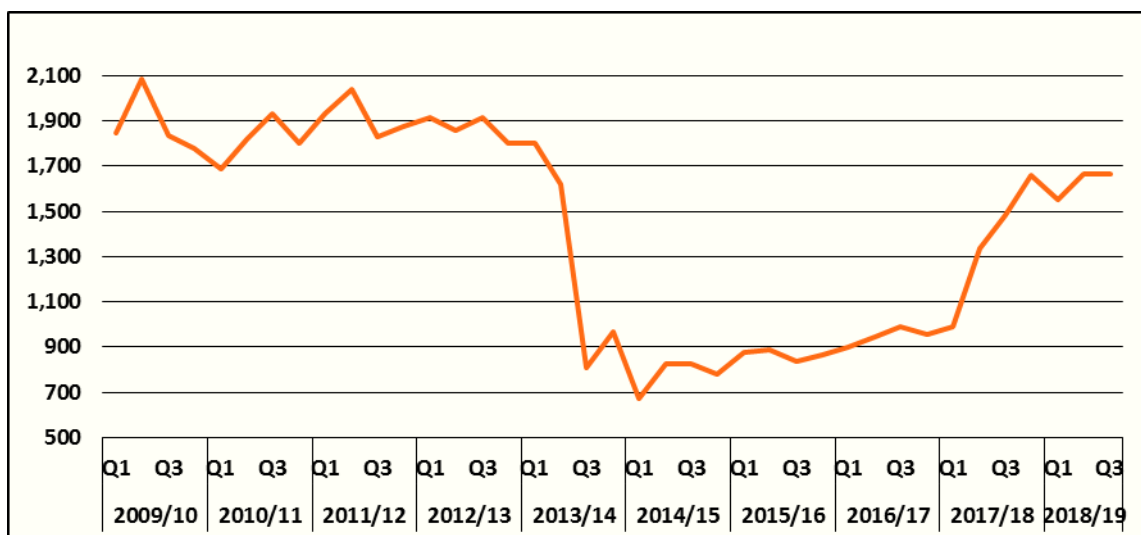
3.11 The social security system should be based on inclusion, support and need, not coercion. The Workplace Capability Assessment and other eligibility tests are not fit for purpose. The next Labour Government must scrap the test instead support a humane system based on a flexible assessment of people's needs, and never again succumb to the siren calls from the right wing press that insist that the route to electoral success lies in the demonisation of disabled workers, and disabled people who are unable to work.

3.12 Disability discrimination law requires strong enforcement by a regulator that properly investigates breaches. GMB recognises the logic of bringing different equalities strands under one regulator, which since 2007 has been the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC).

3.13 Unfortunately, under the Conservatives the EHRC's budget has been slashed by 70 per cent in real terms since 2009/10.^{xx} This has hamstrung the regulator's ability to enforce the Equality Act, and the many people feel that as a result the EHRC is less effective than the Disability Rights Commission that it replaced.^{xxi} GMB believes that it is essential that the EHRC's funding levels are at least restored to pre-2010 levels in real terms.

3.14 Employment tribunal fees, which were imposed in 2013, represented an unacceptable barrier to workplace justice. Applications for disability discrimination cases have yet to recover to their pre-fees level, despite the fees being struck down by the Supreme Court in 2017, indicating that an even greater number of workers are still being denied justice than under the pre-fees regime. The fees era has also left employment tribunals with a national shortage of judges which must be addressed as a priority.^{xxii}

Employment tribunal applications for disability discrimination^{xxiii}



3.15 Public services should be available to disabled people when they need them, but both statutory services and non-statutory services have been cut back severely since 2010. Some of those cuts are described in more detail in the CEC Special Report on Local Government and Austerity. In the NHS in England, over 5,000 specialist mental health nursing posts and over 2,000 learning disability/difficulty nursing posts have been lost in the last decade.^{xxiv}

3.16 Although the Government refuses to publish its own estimate, tens of thousands of people have lost Motability payments worth up to £3,000 a year after losing the mobility component of adult Disabled Living Allowance. These losses have been compounded by cuts to public transport and the withdrawal of discretionary schemes funded by local authorities,^{xxv} while other schemes (such as the Disabled Persons' Railcard) have rightly been criticised on the grounds of their restricted eligibility criteria.

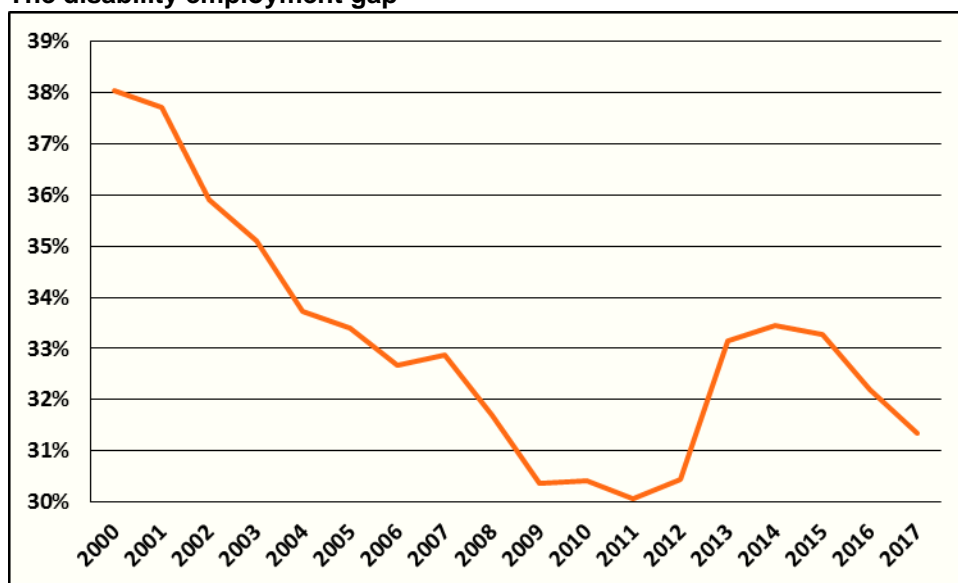
3.17 Disability support services and schemes must be fully funded and extended, where necessary, to ensure that they are open to all disabled people who need them.

3.18 The Westminster Government claims great credit for what it claims as its achievements on disabled employment. Last year the then Work and Pensions Secretary, Esther McVey, pointed to figures published by the ONS and claimed that 'we can see seismic shifts in opportunities for disabled people, with 973,000 more in work since 2013.'^{xxvi} While GMB recognises the positive role that work can play in disabled people's lives, there are good reasons for expressing caution around these figures.

3.19 Over the period identified by the Minister, the number of people estimated to identify as being disabled increased by almost half a million – reflecting, perhaps, higher levels of awareness. This means that at least some disabled people who are claimed to have gained work are likely to have been in employment all along.

3.20 The number of non-disabled people recorded as being in work also increased significantly over the same period. If Government employment programmes were as effective as claimed, we would expect the 'disability employment gap' (the difference between the disabled and non-disabled employment rates) to have narrowed. In fact, although the below figures should be treated with caution due to breaks in the data series, the employment gap remains high and appears to have grown since 2011.

The disability employment gap^{xxvii}



3.21 As discussed above, some apparent improvements may also be due to the coercive effects of a punitive social security system that has helped drive some disabled people to an early grave. No politician with an ounce of humanity should celebrate this 'accomplishment.'

3.22 In addition, as is discussed in the next section of this report, during the period in question thousands of Remploy workers were cast out of employment as the Conservatives began their final assault on the company.

Supported employment

4.1 The Government announced in 2012 that the remaining subsidies to Remploy would cease and its factories and workshops would either be sold or closed. Iain Duncan-Smith, the then Work and Pensions Secretary, celebrated the end of an employment model based on what he called 'Victorian-era segregated employment.'^{xxviii}

4.2 Duncan-Smith was wrong. Remploy's origins dated not to the 19th century but to the new world of 1945, and a Labour Government that believed in full employment and Ministers who were determined to avoid a repeat of mistakes made after 1918.

4.3 The First World War, and the return to the UK of hundreds of thousands of veterans who bore the physical and mental scars of conflict, led to an important change in public attitudes towards disability. New industries emerged as disabled ex-servicemen sought employment, including in the manufacture of prosthetic limbs which were organised by the predecessor unions of the GMB.

4.4 However, the survivors of the First World War did not return to the 'land fit for heroes' that they were promised. Instead poverty, the means test, and prolonged unemployment became the norm for too many of Britain's newly disabled population.

4.5 By the end of the Second World War, it was clear that a new model would be needed. Thousands of disabled people had already been retrained as munitions workers in Government-run 'Instructional Factories.' In an era when the Government was not afraid to use its power to create far-reaching social programmes, the creation of a national network of supported factories was the logical next step.

- 4.6 The first Remploy factory opened in 1946, producing mattresses and upholstered furniture. The first workers were Polish veterans who were unable to return to their homeland.^{xxxix} Remploy's early workforce was dominated by veterans of the Second and even the First World Wars.
- 4.7 The Ministers who oversaw Remploy's creation spoke in terms of 'rehabilitation' – of providing training and support to 'restore the individual as far as possible to normal.'^{xxxix} Comparatively little thought was given to mental health, people who have what are often described as 'learning disabilities', or other lifelong differences. Nevertheless, over time, Remploy gradually became more inclusive and its workforce became more representative of disabled people as a whole.
- 4.8 Remploy became a household name in its own right as a manufacturer of furniture and clothing. It also became a respected supplier to well-known brands such as Singer, EMI, Marks & Spencer, Sony, and the military.
- 4.9 Remploy survived the privatisation era of the 1980s and 1990s, and by the turn of the millennium the company could still dream of more than doubling its workforce of 6,500 to 15,000. The new Prime Minister, Tony Blair, pledged his 'continuing support for Remploy and its achievements.'^{xxxix}
- 4.10 Unfortunately, the relationship between the Labour Government and the Remploy workforce soon soured as the company's traditional product lines came under increased competition from cheap non-UK imports. Subsidy costs rose as Remploy's top-heavy management structures proved more effective at awarding themselves bonuses and outsourcing contracts than adapting to the challenge.
- 4.11 Remploy was never given the time and the resources it needed. All of a sudden, it seemed that Ministers and management had lost the heart to continue the Remploy model. An 'independent' review was commissioned from PriceWaterhouse Coopers with the aim of securing cover for running Remploy down, public sector orders increasingly went elsewhere, and a National Audit Office report claimed that a number of Remploy factories were unsustainable. Mary Turner commented that the Labour Government in 1945 opened the Remploy factories and I will be damned if a Labour Government of 2005 allows them to shut.^{xxxii}
- 4.12 Shamefully, in 2008 29 factory closures were forced through with the loss of 2,500 jobs, the majority of them disabled workers. Only a quarter of the workers who lost their jobs subsequently found work, according to a later GMB survey. Just one per cent those surveyed had secured work that was better paid than at Remploy.^{xxxiii} It is hard to identify a course of action that was at a greater distance from the values and interests that the Labour Party was founded to represent.
- 4.13 After softening up by Labour, the final blow was inflicted by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats. In December 2010 the new Government asked Liz Sayce to lead another review of Remploy and other disability employment support programmes. The Sayce Report recommended that Remploy factories that could not operate without subsidies should be closed. In March 2012, the Government announced that Remploy's factories and workshops would be sold where possible, and the remainder closed.
- 4.14 Remploy was a heavily unionised employer – overall density was at about 90 per cent – and the workforce fought hard against the closure programme, leading lobbies, protests and even industrial action. But the Government's course was set and the end came quickly.

4.15 In 2011, Remploy still operated 54 sites. In the end, 51 sites were closed and only 18 per cent of jobs were salvaged. The act of closing Remploy cost the taxpayer some £109 million, not including ongoing costs arising from social security payments and NHS costs.^{xxxiv}

Remploy workers marching against closures^{xxxv}

4.16 GMB is not, and has never been, an uncritical apologist for any employer. We were not shy to draw attention to Remploy's top-heavy, well-remunerated and mostly non-disabled management, or what we perceived as the company's inadequate approach to marketing Remploy products.^{xxxvi} Nevertheless, when the time came, we did not hesitate to defend our members, and it is incumbent on the union to defend our members' legacy as Remploy workers in the future.

4.17 During the closure process it became fashionable amongst people who were not disabled to sneeringly refer to Remploy factories as 'employment ghettos.'^{xxxvii} These patronising sentiments are an insult to GMB members who found a sense of value, wellbeing and community at Remploy (and, it may be said, an additionally crass insult to the historical memory of people who were persecuted in real ghettos). It is also possible to detect in some a suggestion that disabled people are better off unemployed than in supported employment.

4.18 Unemployment and a loss of community was the fate that awaited most former Remploy workers (especially those who were disabled). A 2014 post-closure GMB survey confirmed earlier findings: only a quarter of ex-Remploy employees were in work. Of these, sixty per cent were on worse rates of pay, and seven in ten former Remploy employees wanted to be able to return to their old jobs.^{xxxviii}

4.19 The true costs of the closure programme – including its social costs – are yet to be calculated, but it is possible that the end of Remploy manufacturing cost taxpayers more than it saved. The objective set out in the Sayce Report that 'the resources released [from Remploy closures] can be used to increase funding for Access to Work'^{xxxix} have also not been honoured. The DWP's own figures show that Access to Work expenditure fell by ten per cent in real terms between 2010/11 and 2017/18.^{xl}

4.20 New supported businesses arose from the ashes of Remploy, and GMB is proud of our role in the creation of and representation of workers at businesses such as Enabled Works and the York Disabled Workers' Co-operative. GMB is also the union for the workers of the continuation Remploy Employment Services business, which is minority employee-owned. The private sector parent company, Maximus, is currently seeking to acquire this employee shareholding.

4.21 We are determined to ensure that supported businesses in the future, led by disabled workers, for disabled workers, have access to the support (including government financial support) required to deliver the best vision set out by Remploy: one of creating 'real and worthwhile job[s] ... that provide workers with] the money, self-respect and independence which is the right of every citizen.'^{xli}

4.22 Congress 2017 carried a motion that called for 'the previous policy centred around the Remploy network ... to be resurrected, modified and modernised to reflect a new positive way forward and find a place for a modern supported employment program which through ring fenced finance can provide a support structure for long term meaningful employment' (Composite 14 - Employment of Disabled People and Supported Employment). We reiterate that call today. GMB supports the creation of a

new supported employment network, with a presence in each part of the country, which is backed by public funding, that learns from the strengths and weaknesses of the Remploy model. This policy should be put forward by the union as part of our engagement with the Government, and the Labour Party ahead of the next general election.

4.23 GMB does not believe, and we have never believed, that disabled people should be forced to work in supported businesses. We want to see inclusive environments established in every part of the economy. Our point has consistently been that disabled people should have a choice, and it is that choice that has been denied in most parts of the country by the closure of the Remploy network.^{xiii}

4.24 Supported businesses face a number of immediate challenges that require a policy response. GMB echoes the call by the British Association for Supported Employment (BASE) for a fully-funded, long-term replacement for the Protected Places element of the Work Choice Programme, with sufficient discretion and flexibility to accommodate workers who may have complex needs.^{xiii}

4.25 While GMB welcomes the principle of Supported Internships and Inclusive Apprenticeships as a means of opening doors to employment, we want these programmes to be as accessible and inclusive as possible, and we are concerned in general about programmes that tie eligibility to Education, Health and Care Plans, which in practice are not available to many people who meet the statutory definition of disability (as discussed in the 2018 CEC Special Report on Schools and Colleges).

4.26 Brexit also poses potential challenges to the sector. At the moment, the right to reserve contracts below a certain value to business where at least 30% are 'disabled or disadvantaged workers' is enshrined in Article 20 of the European Procurement Directive 2014/24/EU.^{xiv}

4.27 Although the provision does not appear to be immediately under threat, vigilance is required in this area in the future. GMB would like to see this provision strengthened and its use extended more widely across the public sector. Long-term funding solutions are also required following the anticipated loss of grants to disability projects through the European Social Fund, which is investing €4.9 billion in the UK between 2014 and 2020.^{xiv}

The social model of disability

5.1 The UK has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In relation to the world of work, the Convention sets out a basic 'right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities.'^{xvi}

5.2 The Convention also enshrines the importance of the social model of disability (or as the UN calls it, the human rights model). This approach recognises that people are disabled by inappropriate barriers which should be removed to make society more inclusive. It stands in contrast to the older, medical model of disability which focuses on 'fixing' disabled people and minimising differences.

5.3 The UK Government (and, to a lesser extent, devolved governments) have been sharply criticised by the UN's investigatory committee for 'grave and systematic violations of the Convention.' The committee focused on changes to the social security system, cuts to services, and a failure to embrace the social model. It was

the first time that a nation had been investigated by the UN for breaches of the Convention.^{xlvii}

- 5.4 In line with existing Congress policy, GMB supports the social model of disability (Motion 389, Congress 2018). We recognise that too many disabled people are constantly required to 'prove' their disabilities and emphasise their 'weaknesses' to public bodies ranging from employment tribunals to the NHS.
- 5.5 Unfortunately, the language of the Equality Act continues to reflect, in part, the older, more medical approach to disability. The requirement to prove that a condition is 'long-term' can also have the effect of excluding some mental health conditions. Although the social model is enshrined in the UN convention and EU caselaw, its impact on UK institutions both public and private has been limited.
- 5.6 The Disability Discrimination Act and the Equality Act were landmark legislative achievements, but GMB believes that the time has come for the law to be amended to enshrine the social model in UK legislation and be more inclusive of mental health conditions. While the form that this amendment would take should be subject to consultation, one suggestion that has been made is for the Public Sector Equality Duty to be extended to private sector organisations.^{xlviii}

The Equality Act 2010 must reflect the social model of disability GMB motion to TUC Disabled Workers' Conference 2019

This Conference supports the social model of disability, which is enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and European case law.

Conference notes that the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has criticised the UK for 'grave and systematic violations of the Convention,' saying 'that not enough is being done to ... put the human rights model of disability into practice,' and also the Committee has recommended that the UK should 'ensure that the human rights model of disability is protected by law and informs policies affecting disabled people across the UK.'

Conference believes that, as the current law is based on the medical model of disability, it is harmful to disabled people. We further believe that employers, the DWP, the NHS, employment tribunals, and relevant other bodies, will continue to use outdated assumptions, language and processes until the social model is fully enshrined in UK legislation.

This Conference calls upon the TUC and its affiliates to lobby the UK Government and the Labour Party to act on the UN Committee's recommendation and adopt a policy of amending the Equality Act 2010 so that it reflects the social model of disability.

GMB and disability

- 6.1 GMB is proud of its historic role as a union for disabled people. We are determined to build and improve on our campaigning work, both now and in the future, in accordance with our core principle of campaigning for equality through inclusion.
- 6.2 GMB does not regard disabled people as passive victims who can only advance due to the help of their non-disabled co-workers. We do not talk about our members in the language of severity or suffering – those are judgements that only the disabled members themselves are entitled to make. We do recognise that the most durable

solutions to the problem of unequal treatment, as with all other workplace issues, will come about through collective action and solidarity.

- 6.3 Within GMB's structures, disabled members are represented along with other equalities strands on the National Equality Forum. A Self Organised Group – GMB Ability – is a strong campaigning body within GMB London Region. An industrially focussed Supported Employment Activists Committee has been established within the Manufacturing Section. A GMB member holds the disability seat on the TUC Women's Committee, and GMB is supporting candidates for seats on the TUC Disabled Workers Committee.
- 6.4 In 2020, GMB will hold a GMB disabled workers national summit which will discuss members' campaigning and policy priorities and objectives.
- 6.5 GMB continues to promote the interests of disabled workers at a national level. In the past year we have engaged with officials and the Labour Party. The policies set out in this report will form part of our policy agenda in the future.
- 6.6 We recognise that the Labour Party has done important policy work during its time in opposition. GMB welcomed the 2017 manifesto 'with and for disabled' people, and we call for a stand-alone disability manifesto document to become a recurring feature of Labour Party election campaigns. GMB welcomes and supports the Labour Party Neurodiversity Manifesto document which has been drawn up with a strong input from lay trade union activists.
- 6.7 In the past year, GMB has launched two new platform disability campaigns. Reasonable adjustments can transform people's experience of work. They are often free or inexpensive, but GMB members have experienced difficulties with transferring adjustments when their circumstances change. This issue was raised by GMB Ability. In response, GMB and the TUC developed a model Reasonable Adjustments Passport which was launched in February 2019,^{xlix} and GMB has engaged with the DWP on future national policy work in this area.
- 6.8 Congress 2018 called on the GMB to launch a campaign to raise awareness of and provide members with support relating to neurodivergent conditions such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, autism and ADHD (Composite 9 – Raising Awareness of Hidden Disabilities). In response, in October 2018 GMB launched the Thinking Differently at Work campaign which included detailed legal guidance, signposting of resources, a model employment policy, and the first ever trade union guide to dyspraxia.ⁱ
- 6.9 In 2019/20 we want to expand the range of resources available for the Thinking Differently at Work campaign in conjunction with industrial activism. The GMB Equalities Through Inclusion Department is also taking forward a project with GMB Midland and East Coast Region to provide support for neurodivergent reps.
- 6.10 In accordance with the principle of 'nothing about us without us,' GMB has ensured that campaign materials – including for the Reasonable Adjustments Passport and the Thinking Differently campaign on neurodiversity – have been drawn up in consultation with GMB members.
- 6.11 GMB supports and promotes the TUC Dying to Work Campaign for decent treatment of workers with life-limiting conditions, and we recognise and applaud the critical role of GMB Midland and East Coast Region in the creation of that campaign.ⁱⁱ

6.12 GMB recognises that workers with hidden disabilities can face profound barriers at work and in wider society. We will campaign to raise awareness of hidden disabilities (including conditions such as diabetes, Irritable Bowel Syndrome and Crohn's disease that are not covered by the Thinking Differently at Work campaign) and produce materials that can be used in the workplace.

6.13 GMB believes that our own union should reflect the values of inclusion that we wish to see in wider society. It may not always be possible to anticipate every accessibility need, but our own practices, premises and communications should be as accessible to disabled members as possible. GMB is reviewing its own communication practices, and we recognise that GMB staff may have a role to play in providing advice in this area.

6.14 GMB recognises that the interests of its disabled members are the interests of the union as a whole, and that more broadly disability rights are human rights. A truly equal society can only be achieved when an end has been put to disability exclusion and discrimination. GMB is determined to play its part.

THE PRESIDENT: We now move to the first of our CEC Special Reports on Disability and Supported Employment. Just to recap the debating procedure, the report will be moved and seconded by members of the CEC. I will then call only one speaker from each region who wishes to speak on behalf of their region. We will then move on to the vote on the Special Report. Before then, can I ask speakers on the Equality and Inclusion group of motions, that is Motions 118, Composite 5, Composite 6, Composite 7, and Motion 124, please get ready for the next debate. Dean Gilligan, CEC, London Region to move the Special Report. Is it too early, Dean?

DEAN GILLIGAN (CEC, Public Services): Morning, President, and Congress. I am suffering a wee bit so forgive me. Speaking on behalf of the CEC in support of the Special Report: Disability and Supported Employment. Congress, it is our fundamental aim to represent the interests of all our members but as this report sets out disabled people continue to face unacceptable barriers, both inside and outside work. Discrimination is rife. One-in-five disabled workers has had a job offer withdrawn after disclosing their condition to an employer. Disabled workers earn about a tenth less than their non-disabled colleagues. The disability employment gap is not narrowing with the creation of a hostile environment which has seen 6,000 people die within six months of being declared fit to work. The UK has been found to have made grave systematic violations of the United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Congress, that mark of shame is on this callous Conservative Tory government.

As we celebrate GMB's historic 130th anniversary we should be proud of our own record, proud of the fact that we have organised veterans disabled by war after every major conflict, proud of our record of representing Remploy workers which continues to this day. I am proud, too, of the work of the self-organised group GMB Ability in the London region. (*Applause*) You are a bit slow! We know that we can do so much more and that is why when our members told us that they found it difficult to transfer their reasonable adjustments to a new role or a new employer GMB launched a new

Trade Union Reasonable Adjustment Passport, which is endorsed by the TUC. Those of you who were here last year will remember the fantastic speech by Serene Thomson from Southern Region who called for more support for workers with conditions such as dyslexia. GMB launched a *Thinking Differently at Work* campaign which is already changing employer attitudes. Of course, GMB has been at the forefront of the *Dying to Work* campaign for dignity and fair treatment for workers who have terminal illness. This year you have told us that you wanted materials for those with a hidden disability. We are going to go away and make that happen, too.

Congress, this Special Report has also come about because our members told us we needed a new strategy. The manufacturing sector, in particular, has worked hard to produce such a report. This Special Report sets out the need for a modern supported employment programme with ring-fenced funding in line with the motions carried at Congress two years ago. It sets out our support for a social model of disability which recognises that people are disabled by barriers in society that need to be removed. It commits us to a principle of “*Nothing about us without us*”, which places disabled workers at the heart of making decisions that affect them and it lays out a message that when challenges arise they are not just an issue to be resolved for one worker through individual casework until they arise again for someone else. The most lasting changes will always be achieved by removing those barriers through collective bargaining and collective action, just as we would for any other industrial issue.

Those are the issues that are discussed in this report. We think that sets out a positive agenda for the union ahead of GMB’s first disability summit next year. Congress, please endorse the report. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Dean. James Stribley of Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region to second.

JAMES STRIBLEY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire, Commercial Services): President, Congress, proud to be a former Remploy worker, and proud to be seconding this Special Disability Report on Supported Employment. Congress has debated Remploy many times but I make no apology for that. Many years might have passed since the Remploy factories closed in 2013 when the workers were thrown on the scrap heap but the sense of the injustice does not diminish with time, it grows stronger. Congress, they were highly skilled GMB members at Remploy, they found dignity and fulfilment with their work and they have not found employment since. Meanwhile, the promises that were made around redirecting them with access to work have been broken.

Congress, we must never forget Remploy and the disgraceful rundown by the Labour government before the Conservatives dealt the final blow. I am proud of the role GMB played in fighting to save Remploy because it was right for them to do that. Now we have to fight for our future, new businesses that enable work, and the York Disabled Workers, and there is another factory in Wigan that had just been shut down that the cooperative have raised from the ashes with GMB support, but we also need a proper national supported employment model with dedicated funding to give disabled workers the choice of working in that environment, if that is what they want. The report sets out the agenda.

Congress, please support the report. It is an interesting report so please read it. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, James. Well done. There will now follow one speaker from each region that wishes to put up a speaker, so Birmingham first, please.

PAUL RYMER (Birmingham & West Midlands): Good morning, Congress, President. First-time speaker, first-time delegate. (*Applause*) I am delighted to be supporting this report. This is my second year at Congress. Last year I sat up there with a chance of actually seeing the union machine working. I sat there probably for the first session thinking, "What the bloody hell is going on." Apologies to the people watching. As the session worked and I got to understand what was going on, the machine worked, and this report I think is a good example of a body of work that has been done to give activists in the union an actual guide to get out and campaign on behalf of the disabled.

I would ask, as did the two motion movers, the mover and the seconder, that you read the report. Use it as a guide to go out into the workplace and campaign for the disabled people that need the support. Use the history that is in the report to look at the way the GMB continue to influence the way that disabled people are supported and live happy and productive lives. The report also looks at the hidden disease that colleagues actually use as barriers in different ways. What the report is asking us to do is to build a campaign that builds material that will help us to campaign in the workplace and support colleagues with such disabilities and conditions as diabetes, Crone's disease, and irritable bowel, because, colleagues, I am sure you have the same as me represented members that have been disciplined for high Bradford scores, and the conditions that I have mentioned are the ones that have been missed and this is the way to stop the discrimination and exclusion. The exclusion and discrimination in a truly equal society cannot be achieved until we have stopped the disability exclusion and discrimination, and GMB are determined to play their part in it. Congress, please support the report. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Paul. Spot on time. Well done. London Region, please.

NICOLA WARR (London): I ask to speak on this report as like many others with hidden disabilities our challenges are often unrecognised simply because of them not being visible. Looking at me standing here you may think to yourself, she does not look disabled, but in fact I broke my back and I stand here before you with titanium rods holding my spine together. (*Applause*) It is a life of constant pain and a loss of full mobility but like most disabled people life goes on. However, to some individuals the removal of social payments like this inept Tory government eroded what semblance of life they had resulting in many taking their own lives. To this end I am pleased that the report recognises hidden disability and that we will campaign to raise awareness in this area. Likewise, we welcome the recognition given to the Labour Party for their policy work and the launching of our own GMB campaigns, and the new disability platforms. We are pleased with the statement that we are determined to ensure supported businesses have access to the necessary support for

disabled workers and that we are committed to improving upon our disability campaign work, both now and in the future.

The report should have gone further to explain how we will build upon our campaigning work incorporating more disability related training for our reps. We have also noted that there is very little in the way of recommendations. The fundamental questions of what, how, and when, need to be addressed but perhaps this will be forthcoming in the not too distant future. What is clear is that the report has focused heavily on the past and very little on the future.

The Chair of our Regional Disability Forum, Gordon Brunning, has been quite insistent that I raise the following points which of course I am happy to do. The report in general lacks detail in its approach to supported employment. Using the Remploy model the report lacks teeth and vision and we welcome a more effective solution to the long-term issues of meaningful employment for disabled workers. The report should have gone further with national office working much closer with regional equality forums and self-organised groups. We cannot and should not treat the report as words on a page but it must be matched by our own actions and commitments to an all inclusive diverse and equality-led trade union. Gordon's final point is that our union needs to be more visionary and we welcome an opportunity to provide a contribution.

To conclude, the London Region welcomes the CEC Special Report and would like to thank all those who contributed to it. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Nicola, well done. Midland & East Coast, please.

DEBASHIS DE (Midland & East Coast): First-time speaker, first-time delegate. Brothers and sisters, I am speaking in support of the CEC special Report on Disability and Supported Employment. Stats show that one-in-five people in the UK workplace have a disability of some sort. I watched with total sadness and horror as successive governments systematically dismantled supported employment in schemes such as Remploy. We campaigned hard to stop this disgrace of our generation but, colleagues, we failed. Many of these members who were given support, friendship, and most importantly dignity through supported employment, are still not working to this day, and there are many who suffer from depression.

Colleagues, it is time to right this wrong and allow those who wish to work in supported employment to have an opportunity to do so, but not driven through economic necessity. There are those who may not wish to be in supported employment but we will still support them in their wishes and to make the most of their abilities. We have to support and integrate those people who wish it into the mainstream and with supported employment.

As an inclusive trade union this is an issue for all of us. Although we seem to have made strides in this area, since Tory austerity began in 2010 almost 6,000 people have died within six months of being declared fit for work following work capability tests. This is a backward step and one that we cannot sit back and allow to continue.

Finally, let our people work with dignity and work safely, and allow those who struggle to work with a disability to have access and help, and support, as fellow human beings they deserve. Congress, please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Debashis. Thank you. Northern Region speaker, please. Formally. Thank you, Northern Region. North West & Irish Region.

JOE SMITH (North West & Irish): Very proud I am, six years further on since the last factory of Remploy closure with our GMB fighting and campaigning for supported employment. I hope you continue in Mary's legacy kicking our backside, pushing us and shoving us, and continue to fight with the Labour Party hoping we can get this through. What a pleasure to be here.

Joe Smith, member of Wigan 87 branch, North West & Irish Region, former Remploy consortium, supporting this Special Report on Supported Employment. This report produced by the National Office is most welcome and a step in the right direction. Congress, I can say firsthand it is harder for a disabled person to get a job with decent pay and conditions, and with security.

As a non-paid director of York Disabled Workers Cooperative, a small workshop in York employing only disabled people, we see every week disabled people coming to our factory trying to find jobs. This proves that the Government have failed in the provision of supported employment. We see parents with grown-up teenagers with learning difficulties and physical health conditions coming to the factory looking for a few hours of respite, hoping their child can come and volunteer, but this comes at a price. It comes at a cost. Unfortunately, we have to say no.

I would like to thank my region, North West & Irish Region, for the tremendous continued support campaigning for Remploy and supporting disabled people into work. A huge thank you for providing and supporting York Disabled Workers Cooperative. We would not be here if it was not for my region. Thank you, Paul, thank you, Dougie, and all my Regional Committee. (*Applause*)

An enabled workshop in Leeds employs more than 30 people in the packaging production. This factory would be non-existent if it was not for a former Employ worker, Tony Gledhill, and his partner, former Remploy factory manager, Tina Burnley, and a dedicated group of 13 former Remploy workers who put in £5,000 of their redundancy to start this factory up in Leeds. I would like to thank the Yorkshire Region in supporting enabled works, in assisting and finding new contracts, enabled works then moving the non-food production products over to York, this way there is more benefit to both factories. These small factories need support and it must come from central government and not from handouts and charities. Take the poppy factory in Richmond, a charity for veterans with physical and mental health conditions, they believe the veterans should love the work they do but with some people mental health and physical conditions find it tough to stay in employment. Men and women who have served this country have a wealth of experience and transferable skills that can be of huge benefit to any business. Usel is Northern Ireland's largest supporter of getting people with disabilities or health conditions into employment, a company very supportive to trade unions and that is recognised by the GMB trade union. It operates a social enterprise business, a model that exists solely to help those with disability and

health-related conditions move into sustained employment. They employ and train over 1,200 people with disabilities and health conditions across Northern Ireland. They get no fund whatsoever from central government. It is all down to public procurement with local authorities and winning contracts across Northern Ireland. None of these four companies win contracts because people feel sorry for disabled people. They win contracts because of their ability and dedication providing a substantial product all made by disabled people. *(Applause)*

We demand funds are made available from central government to be used by local authorities to set up and support these workplaces and employ the majority of disabled people and pay the real national wage by subsidy of each person employed and each enterprise should also have public procurement available.

Congress, it was a Labour government that set up Remploy, let it be a Labour government that again sets up disabled people into work. Bevan said that we will never allow disabled people to live in poverty and stand on our street corners selling whatever they can to survive. We will find production. Let me say that this Government have done nothing but destroy Bevan's work. As I speak, there are more and more homeless people, a large percentage have served our Queen and country, left to rot and the only way they can survive is on handouts.

Congress, this is just the start. Our next step is to knock on the doors of parliament, get the message across, and send it to our Shadow Chancellor. He promised us a commitment at the North West Justice Conference. Let's take him to his word. Let the battle cry begin. Please support this special motion. I support the motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you for that. That was really good. There is also the York Disabled Workers Co-Op stall. If you have not been there yet, go and visit it. There are other exhibitors available. Now, GMB Scotland, please.

PAT DUFFY (GMB Scotland): One of our members/officers, had written a speech here for me but I find it very difficult to stand up here with a magnifier and my eyes will not stay in the same place all the time. I have been visually impaired since birth, I am now registered blind, and I also have hidden disabilities. I am diabetic and I have cancer. I started work in 1960. There was no protection for disabled people. I remember in Glasgow when blind and disabled people were carted about in grey buses with the windows blacked out so that other people could not catch Down's syndrome, and all the other things. We have moved on a bit and I say a bit. I was going to say every time I say "Tory government" I want to be sick so I must not say it again.

People who cannot work in mainstream employment, blind people, the RNIB ran a survey of 12 employers and asked them if they would employ a blind person; 12 of them said no so what chance has a blind person got. In Glasgow we have a workshop which is supported by the local council. They make kitchens, bedding, they have all different contracts from the council, and they make a profit. Remploy was a good place for people who cannot work in mainstream employment. I worked in mainstream employment all my life because I conned my way through it. It is as

simple as that. I could not tell employers in those days that I could not see very well because they would have thrown me out of the door.

I remember representing a girl who was blind, she was physiotherapist and she was applying for a job slightly higher up and they took her to this room and showed her where everything was. Now, when that girl went back to the actual interview they had moved the furniture round about, and that was the local council. I was a shop steward and I can assure you I had a few words to say about it.

Remploy was a good thing in the sense that the people who could not work outside had somewhere to work. The last speaker spoke about the kids coming to visit to get a few hours respite. I have worked at a college, Connell College, every month and all the Down 's syndrome kids, they all came over and talked to us. They have somewhere to go but there is no work unless it is in a charity shop working for free, a couple of hours to give the family a wee bit of respite.

I ask you to read the report. If there are things in it you think need improving, fine, but at least we have this report and we can only move on from here. At the disabled conferences I hear people talking about being bullied and frightened by an employer. I have never been bullied or frightened by an employer in my life, never. *(Applause)* That is solely because I am a member of GMB. I was trained with the GMB in Manchester College. I covered every issue that there was to cover and I faced managers and I faced councillors, and everything else, and sometimes I wanted to go over the top of the table and thump them but that is not allowed nowadays, you cannot do that now. *(Laughter)*

It is all about ATOS and the benefits. Way back years ago we used to get what was called invalidity benefit. My mammy called it my "infidelity" money. *(Laughter)* So she did, aye. I'll tell my wife I am getting "infidelity" money! The ATOS thing is a disgrace. Nurses, who know nothing about people's health are telling people they are fit to work. Blind people never ever received DLE until 2011 when the Labour government came in and they changed it. The DWP said that seeing was not a bodily function. Think of that. How clever is that. That is the people who are running these things.

I ask you, please, I am not going on any more, I ask you to read the report. Again, I thank the members of GMB Scotland. I actually come here without the members looking after me, and travelling, accessibility to trains and buses, that is another thing, talking buses. I would love to talk to you about talking buses. I go on buses. I get off at a stop and ask somebody where I am going and the first thing they say is, "See that light down there, son..." It is true. *(Applause)* It is a fact. Sighted people do not understand. Down in Bournemouth I got lost in a hotel and I asked a lady, I said, "Can you tell me where this hotel is?" She said, "See those two green bins down there, just follow them." Sighted people do not understand. I ask you to support the report. Thank you. *(Standing ovation)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Pat, that was great. Southern Region.

EMILY BROTHERS (Southern): Southern Region welcomes the statement on disabled people and supported employment. We believe it sets the basis and the

foundations for taking forward our policy in this area. It commits to the social model of disability. However, much of the following narrative, unfortunately, perhaps takes the pattern of the medical model around people's conditions. So as the delegate for London suggested, more work needs to be done in terms of our thinking and the practical proposals that go from this statement forward to form our longer-term policies and practices and informs the next Labour government. It is important to frame that around the social model.

GMB is rightly ambitious for mainstream employment of disabled people. However, supported employment can provide meaningful work for some disabled people, such as those that are enabled workers. I say to Joe Smith from the York Disabled Workers Co-operative, and his colleagues who spoke this morning in this debate, that you are making a valuable contribution to the British economy and as a trade union we will fight for you to continue to play an important role in both local and national economic prosperity. (*Applause*) Disabled people have a role to contribute and GMB has a role to support disabled people in that.

Closures driven by a Tory government of Remploy and other supported employment schemes means that disabled people need an alternative and that is an alternative radical Labour government to bring about supported employment but also to enshrine broader rights through the United Nations Convention on the rights of disabled people into UK law in a way that the previous Labour government did with the Human Rights Act, to legislate for the right to independent living, to mandate disability pay reporting and reasonable adjustment passports, the latter being very much led by GMB, to fund access to work support, and scrap capability tests and punitive sanctions that are driving disabled people deeper into poverty. We also need to build on the Equality Act 2010, not to push it aside because that might run the risk of the Tories seeking to dismantle it but to build on and change the definition to reflect the social model, to bring about greater enforcement around the built environment and transport and to extend the public sector duty to the private sector and membership organisations, too.

There is a significant agenda going forward for GMB to seek to influence but also for a future Labour government to implement. We need to build on what is in place already in terms of the Equality Act changing the definition, bringing about new clauses that effect change, but also seeking to revise other elements that also take account of disabled people from other groups, too.

Congress, it is 100 years next year that will mark the march of blind people from Newport, Manchester, and Leeds, who marched in 1920 to Trafalgar Square on a campaign for the collective bargaining rights of blind workers in supported employment. We will mark the century. This was a precursor to marches like the Jarrow marches that came years later. Those proud disabled people who were seeking to work and provide for their families in supported employment carried a banner that said, "Justice not Charity". One hundred years later that is what disabled people from GMB and across the labour and trades union Movement are asking for in contributing to our economy. It is about working and being given the tools to work. Congress, please support this statement. Please support the campaign going forward and continue to support disabled people, justice not Charity. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Emily. GMB Wales and South West.

PAUL KEMPTON (GMB Wales & South West): Good morning. I am pleased to be speaking in support of the CEC Special Report. As the document makes clear, this is a complex and challenging subject area. The report reminds us that the GMB and the wider union movement have long endorsed the social model of disability and rejects the medical model. I, and others, am disabled by the barriers society erects to our full participation, not because of any impairments. This report, together with our recent guidance on reasonable adjustment passports, on Euro diversity, and conditions such as autism, dyspraxia and dyslexia, and the comprehensive training on supporting members with mental health issues, shows that we are the cutting edge union in this field.

The report is comprehensive but we cannot rest on our laurels. We need to continue to find a vision that truly embraces all disabled. We want more guidance publications and we need to learn from the experience of Remploy and enabled works, and others to find a model for supported employment. Why, because as this report clearly demonstrates, there is a disability pay gap and there is a disability employment gap. I retire from paid work at the end of this month and my disability has not prevented me from paying my full tax liabilities for 50 years and that is more than Philip Green can say. (*Applause*) Thank you.

We live in austere times. Hate crime is on the rise often fuelled by government-fed intolerance and media untruths about the luxury life on benefits. Since 2010, we have seen major reversals of previous gains. PIP is a nightmare. ESA is blatantly abused by private companies making eligibility decisions they clearly are not competent to make.

Congress, there is so much good stuff in this report that it makes it impossible to detail in the time. I will, however, flag up one issue of importance to me, if I may. On page 5, paragraph 2.11, it refers to physical barriers. All, and I mean all, GMB buildings whether they are owned, rented, or hired, must be fully accessible to everyone. (*Applause*) There is a motion on the agenda that refers to this from the National Equalities Conference. Accessible means included, not accessible means excluded, and for me that means having a fully functioning induction loop. Sadly, that is not always the case. Please read this report, digest, and engage your disabled members in seeking further progress. GMB Wales & South West supports and hopes you do, too. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. Yorkshire and North Derbyshire.

PHILIP STEER (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I have a script here done by the region. However, a lot of this has been said by other members this morning. I hate reading off a script or off a speech. I did not start in work disabled. I have looked like this over the last five years. I'll tell you what, my company that I work for have been good to me. They have made an alternative job for me but that is not right for a lot of companies. A lot of companies will get rid of you if you have any sort of disability and to try and get back into employment is a nightmare. This report is a good one but it's only a start. Let's try and keep it going. Thank you. I support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Philip. Thank you to all the speakers. That is a really useful and important debate to have. I can now put the Special Report to a vote. All those in favour please show. That is unanimous. Thank you.

Special Report: Disability and Supported Employment was ADOPTED.

EMPLOYMENT POLICY: EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

THE PRESIDENT: We are now on to Employment Policy: Equality and Inclusion and we will now debate the first group of motions, three regions are represented in Composite 7 on Menopause Policies, and all three regions will be invited to speak. Please could speakers on the next group of motions also make themselves ready, that is Composites 9 and 10, Motions 131, 134, and 136, and then those motions will be debated next. The mover and seconder of Motion 118, please.

ETHNICITY PAY GAP MOTION 118

118. ETHNICITY PAY GAP

This Congress notes that recent studies have shown that there is a huge gap in the pay that BME workers take home compared to their white counterparts.

According to a survey covering London public sector employees, BME staff take home on average 37% less than white colleagues, driven by the lack of BME staff in senior posts.

Further research covering the whole economy by the Resolution Foundation showed that BME workers lose £3.2bn a year in wages compared to white workers. It found Pakistani and Bangladeshi male graduates earned an average £2.67 an hour (12%) less, while among female graduates, black women faced the biggest pay penalty, of £1.62 an hour (9%).

So far only 3% of employers with over 250 employees are voluntarily reporting their ethnicity pay gap, and this is just not good enough.

Our BME members deserve to know that they will have the same opportunities to earn good wages as their white colleagues, and that measure are being taken, not just to recognise the gap, but to eliminate it.

Congress calls for:

- An investigation into the ethnic minority pay gap with our largest employers, either jointly with the employer, or if they will not participate, a union led survey of our members
- GMB to lead from the front by reporting on GMB's ethnic minority pay gap as an employer, and work with the TUC to encourage other trade unions to do the same
- The issue of an ethnicity pay gap to be publicised to our branch officers and reps with briefing and campaign materials explaining the issues which lead to the gap
- Work with the Labour Party to develop policies which not only ensure that employers report on their pay gap, but that there are measures to combat it across the economy

NORTH WEST LONDON BRANCH
London Region
(Referred)

RICKY JONES (London): Before I start, I just want to say a big thank you to Ida from our region. I had really big problems trying to get this printed this morning; I

had a memory stick and I was panicking and stressing, and she managed to pull it through. Thank you very much, Ida. I really appreciate that. (*Applause*)

President, Congress, the Government have asked employers to disclose their ethnicity pay gap. To date less than 5% of large companies have made an effort to analyze the pay gap. Congress, this simply is not good enough. Do we need a report to tell us that BAME workers are not progressing up the ladder to higher paid employment compared to their white counterparts? No, we do not. Do we also need the same report to identify BAME workers holding the highest amount of low paid and unskilled jobs? No, we do not. Why is this, because this is probably visible in each and every one of your workplaces. Do we need this report so we can beat them with the GMB stick? Yes, we do. The Government have said it is likely to make it a requirement in the future. I say they need to make it a requirement here and now.

BAME employees have suffered far too long and they should not have to suffer one minute longer. We need joint investigations between the GMB and all employers and if the employer does not cooperate we should produce our own union-led survey of all our members, and GMB to lead the way also in reporting our findings to the TUC; also encouraging other trade unions to do the same, publish the findings to our branch officers, our reps, and campaign materials explaining the issues which lead to the gap. Call on the Labour Party to work with us to develop policies which ensure that employers must report on their pay gap by putting in place measures to combat this across the economy.

Congress, we cannot trust our employers to make the necessary changes, to close the gap of BAME workers. To make this happen we must do what is bullet-pointed within the motion. This is the type of stick that we shall beat the employer with finally and get justice for the BAME workers. Congress, I move. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ricky. Secunder for Motion 118? Formally. Thank you. Composite 5.

REPORTING THE RACE PAY GAP COMPOSITE MOTION 5

(Covering Motions 119 and 120)

119 – Race Pay Equality Gap – London Region

120 – Mandatory Reporting of Race Pay Gap – London Region

This Congress is disappointed that the race pay gap between black and white workers has never been formally addressed except through research and reports which have consistently confirmed that it exists year upon year. It is time that the race pay gap is addressed.

This Congress welcomes the publishing of the gender pay gap and the mandatory reporting on the government website. However, as in the case of the BBC, the gender pay gap like other equal pay reports has dismissed the racial parity in terms of pay.

The racial disparity in terms of pay gap is not addressed at any level be it in the gig economy, commercial, public, or manufacturing sector.

A recent report by the Resolution Foundation found that black workers are losing out on £3.2 billion a year in wages in comparison to white workers doing the same work.

The extent of the race pay disparity for 1.9 million black workers is stark and impacts the standard of living of those affected.

The TUC report on the pay gap for minority workers in respect of achieved qualifications revealed that students who entered the workplace after GCSE are paid 11% less than their white counterparts. Those who attained degrees, the pay gap increased to 23%.

The race pay gap impacts the standard of living of those affected.

We welcome the GMB National Equality Organising Strategy Report agreed at Congress 2018 which agreed to develop a toolkit as well as the gender pay gap for BAME workers and would like to see if the union responded to the Government consultation on Ethnicity Pay gap which ended in January.

To build on the report, we call upon GMB to:-

- Call for mandatory ethnicity pay reporting for employers with more than 50 employees and encourage workers to regularly carry out a pay audit;
- Take action to reduce race pay gaps so that jobs are awarded on ability and fairness;
- Work with the government to encourage employers to ensure apprenticeship schemes are of quality instead of low paid or voluntary work;
- Campaign for more investment in industries where BAME workers are over represented;
- Undertake research/report on the impact of BAME workers who were prevented from taking legal action against their employers on race discrimination due to the tribunal fees;
- Continue to campaign vigorously and visibly on equality impact on organisations policies;
- Continually monitor and ensure that the recommendations as set out in the McGregor-Smith Review "Race in the Workplace" are implemented.

We therefore call on Conference to:-

1. Work with GMB sponsored MPs to work with us for legislation for companies to report and publish their race pay gap.
2. Campaign in whatever way to raise awareness of the race pay gap and organise in workplaces for employers to publish this data.
3. Raise awareness of this inequality through fact sheets, briefings, etc or whatever means.
4. Work with relevant organisations such as TUC to campaign for employers to publish this data.
5. Ensure that the issue of the race pay gap is at the forefront in any restructure, redundancy or other reorganisation in the workplace.

(Carried)

TARANJIT CHANA (London): Congress, it is now over 50 years since the Race Relations Act. In 2017, this Tory government published its Race Disparity Audit telling us something we already knew, the workplace is an area where progress is much needed. We know that black Asian minority ethnic BAME people are doing better in education and attending college and university in high numbers yet success at school and university is not translating into the workplace. 52% of BAME people feel they need to leave their work organisations to progress elsewhere in comparison to 38% of white workers. Also, BAME people are not represented as they should be

in leadership roles. For example, in the NHS BAME representation in leadership roles is 6%. In the police force at Chief Inspector level it is 3% and with head teachers it is 2%. The Race Disparity Audit is not about quotas or promoting people who do not deserve it, it is about identifying the steps to improve fairness in the workplace.

Congress, we need to start at home with an audit of our union and use that data in a positive way to help to take the steps to end inequality and unfairness in the workplace for BAME people. So, Congress, please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Taranjit. A seconder?

FEVZI HUSSEIN (London): Delegates, the trades union Movement has rightly been championing the challenges of financial injustices facing women at work. Facts around the gender pay gap are now much better known as a result of the active campaigns that we have been running. In the workplaces we know mothers are losing out while fathers are benefiting. So when it comes to race why have we not been more proactive in highlighting pay injustices when we talk about the race pay gap? The workplace is showing even greater differentials when it comes to our BAME brothers and sisters. Race for Opportunity recently reported that black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) workers make up a disproportionate number of people in low paid jobs, as the sister has said, with almost a quarter, 23%, of Pakistani employees and a fifth of Bangladeshi, Chinese, and black Caribbean workers earning less than £25,000 per year. It is also found that white employees have an average of almost four promotions during their career compared to just two-and-a-half for British African, Indian, and Pakistani employees. The Resolution Foundation also found that Britain's 1.9 million BAME workers experience an annual pay penalty of £3.2bn, according to the analysis. The Foundation says that the scale of the pay penalties facing BAME workers should prompt government action, including building on the success of its requirements for firms to report gender pay gaps by making large firms report on their BAME pay gaps too. The Foundation notes that BAME workers have long earned less, on average, than white male workers, as Taranjit said, so the GMB is calling for a campaign to raise more awareness of this pay gap and its effects. We are calling on the Government to make mandatory reporting on the race pay gap a requirement for employers with more than 50 workers and there should be meaningful penalties for those not disclosing this data and for failing to close the ethnicity gap. There are a number of strong recommendations associated with this motion all of which will help us to address this racial inequality and achieve justice for BAME workers everywhere. I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Fevzi. Composite 6.

GENDER PAY GAP

COMPOSITE MOTION 6

(Covering Motions 121 and 122)

121 – Gender Pay Gap – London Region

122 – Gender Pay – London Region

This Congress notes the fight for Equal Pay for women.

This Congress recognises the action taken by Government to request UK companies with 250 or more employees to publish their gender pay gap and gender bonus gap data.

However, the system used to calculate the gender pay gap or the difference in average earnings between women and men, is not straightforward for everyone to understand.

Congress is called upon to do more to train, educate and empower its reps to help reduce the gender pay gap within their workplaces.

In addition to producing a toolkit, Congress calls on GMB to train, educate and empower its reps to use this issue as an equality bargaining tool to reduce the gender pay gap within their workplaces.

(Carried)

STELLA IKANIK (London): First-delegate, second-time speaker. *(Applause)* This Congress recognises that in 2017 the Government introduced legislation that made it statutory for all organisations with 250 or more employees to report annually on their gender pay gap. The gender pay gap shows the difference in the average pay between all men and all women in the workforce overall. The gender pay gap is concerned with differences in the average income of men and women over a standard time period regardless of their seniority. It is a measure that captures not only historical structures equality pay issues within an organisation but also any pay inequalities resulting from differences in the types of jobs performed by men and women.

Congress, please note that the gender pay gap is different to equal pay. Equal pay deals with the pay difference between men and women who carry out the same jobs, similar jobs, or work of the same value. Across the UK men earn 18.4% more than women as of June 2018 according to the Office of National Statistics. The current gender pay gap means women effectively earn less than men in Britain today.

Congress, please allow me to bring this closer to home. You may not believe this but it is concerning that our own GMB union data collected on 5th April 2018 when the workforce consisted of a total of 589 staff, that is, 348 women and 247 men, and the data showed that on 5th April 2018 GMB had a medium gender pay gap of 31.2% and a mean of 25.9%. However, there are some variations in the number of men and women employed at different grades across GMB. GMB employs higher numbers of women than men in the low level jobs and a higher number of men in the higher level jobs. That means that GMB has more men at senior levels and more women at junior roles.

Congress, if the workforce has a particularly high gender pay gap like ours, this can indicate that there may be a number of issues to deal with in terms of recruitment, progression, promotion, and pay. I believe this Congress would agree with me that GMB should lead by example and commit to work of closing the gender pay gap, after all, charity begins at home. Congress, please support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Stella. Secunder?

PUSHPA MAKWANA (London): Congress, the gender pay gap is one of the greatest illustrators of gender inequality in the world of work. Unions have an important part to play in ending disparity between men and women's wages. Women continue to

work under-represented. Traditionally, men occupy industries which pay more. Congress, work performed by women is frequently undervalued and underpaid either because it is enabled work or has traditionally been carried out by women at home, or simply because women are paid less for the work of equal value. In some occupations where it has gradually become dominated by women, such as primary school teaching assistants, salaries have relatively declined for both men and women. Once a profession is so defined as predominantly female it is undervalued and overworked. GMB must challenge gender stereotypes and social norm that limits women access to the labour market and quality jobs and contribute to gender segregation. The more centralised and collective bargaining processes the smaller the pay gap. We should demand greater democracy and transparency of wages and salary scales, and consider how to change minimum wages and collective bargaining to cover female dominated sectors as well as informal occupation workers who are mainly women-led.

Congress, GMB should lead an example on women's presentation in decision-making bodies and at the negotiation table to get a better deal for women in the workplace.

THE PRESIDENT: Pushpa, you have the red light. I am going to have to be tough now.

PUSHPA MAKWANA (London): Equality is important to women representation in union leadership and collective bargaining, which is negotiating the outcome to benefit women workers. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Pushpa. Sorry, I have to be tight on time now so make sure you look ahead. Composite 7, London to move, Scotland to second, and then Southern third, please.

MENOPAUSE POLICIES COMPOSITE MOTION 7

(Covering Motions 123, 125, and 126)

123 – Working Conditions – GMB Scotland

125 – Get the M2M Policy into the Workplace – London Region

126 – Menopause Awareness Training – Southern Region

This Congress is aware that most women are subject to monthly periods or the menopause.

Congress, where are the menopause policies for all our members? We as a union need to address this again and again until we get it right for our members

This is something that had gone on for years with all unions, what we are now seeing is that some areas have a Menopause Policy. If an area has the Menopause policy why can't it be put forward for all of the UK?

Can this policy be adopted by any workplace, council, office, NHS, anywhere where there are women working under conditions that are unacceptable to their health?

Women members of the GMB would welcome help from a policy that is backing their health and safety at work.

The South Lanarkshire branch in Scotland has produced a local Menopause Policy and this has been accepted by all members and management and is now up and running. We ask congress to campaign for this local policy to be accepted by the GMB.

Menopause doesn't just affect women but everyone both directly and indirectly and across all equality strands so we welcome TUC efforts in introducing a new 1 day training course around Menopause Awareness.

London Region GMB Sisters survey "Menstruation To Menopause – it's not an easy ride" had over 1350 responses. Members outlined a number of problems women and trans men experiencing menstruation and menopause face in the workplace such as:

- Many women have to take time off from work to deal with symptoms
- Many women are subject to disciplinary action as a result of triggering sickness absence policies
- Most employers do not have policies to support women in these circumstances

London GMB Sisters developed a comprehensive model workplace policy which can sit alongside current workplace sickness absence policies and this has gained media and member interest.

We call on Congress to:

- Promote the policy throughout our structures as a means for member engagement and as a recruitment opportunity
- Encourage our post holders to include this issue in their bargaining processes
- Use our M2M fans as merchandise to compliment the campaign
- create a GMB Union training course around Menopause Awareness similar to TUC course or add it as part of Equality or Health & Safety training
- lobby MPs to get behind our GMB campaigns.

(Carried)

LESLEY STANSFIELD (London): First-time delegate and first-time mover. *(Applause)* President, Congress, I have a story to tell, a story of blood, sweat, and tears. Once upon a time a very frightened 10-year old started to bleed in the classroom. The male teacher flustered and embarrassed rushed her to a female teacher and was told, "Deal with it." Singled out as some weird oddity, she was ostracised, considered unclean, and ridiculed. Forward 50 years and that embarrassed little girl now stands before you, ashamed once again, not because I bleed, I don't, the menopause has put a stop to that, but because the humiliation, embarrassment, ridicule, is still here alive and kicking in the workplace. We are told that menstruation and menopause issues are something that women should deal with and not be part of employment rights, that absence due to the debilitating conditions suffered by some women, and trans men should be counted against them, and that toilet breaks and supply of sanitary ware are no concern of management. If women did not have periods, the whole sorry lot of them would not be here. *(Applause)* The GMB Sisters' survey found that 84% of respondents did not have access to any sanitary products in the workplace.

Now the sweats, oh, yes, the sweats, that feeling you get of the heat flushes, headaches, dizziness, faltering speech. It may sound funny but you try coping with the menopause at a supermarket till where your official break is not for another 30 minutes, or in a meeting with colleagues who think it is a joke, you are the butt of degrading comments put down to make you feel an outcast. We go home crying, we resign from our jobs, we hear the tumbleweed of silence when we ask for action. Now, we demand change and we have the tools to do it.

GMB Sisters have produced a comprehensive and practical menstruation to menopause, M to M, workplace policy to support women and trans men in the workplace, to change radically how issues around menstruation and menopause are dealt with, to provide training sessions, promoting a taboo-free culture to ensure adequate provisions are made, toilet breaks, sanitary ware, flexible ways of working, workplace adjustments, to allow reasonable penalty-free sick leave, and finally to show that the old Victorian attitude of not talking about “it” has been flushed down the pan and it is all here in this beautifully crafted three-page policy, just three pages, of a ground-breaking history-making policy and GMB can do it. GMB Sisters and Dawn Butler MP are working together in consultation with Brent Council to get this policy borough-wide. Milton Keynes Council are in negotiations with our GMB comrades to implement this policy. It can be done so get the policy in the workplace, give hope to our members by showing that GMB are listening and do something to end the discrimination that comes with ignoring menstruation and menopause as workplace issues. I move this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Lesley. GMB Scotland to second.

FIONA BRANSCOMBE (GMB Scotland): First-time speaker, second time at Congress. GMB Scotland has been leading the way in getting menopause policies adopted in our workplace. GMB members have been raising the profile of the menopause through the Scottish TUC Women’s Committee. As a result it has been brought to life in parliament and in the media. Our focus, however, is always on the workplace. GMB Scotland conducted a menopause survey amongst our own staff last year and we have now pushed our members’ employers to do the same. We now have employers, such as South Lanarkshire Council adopting formally menopause in the workplace policies as a direct result of campaigning and aided by GMB Scotland reps.

South Hampshire Council employs more than 1,000 women, 68% of these women are over the age of 40 and as a result of the new policy being put in place these women will benefit from the provisions of cold drinking water, a quiet area, and time out or time to take a walk outside. Women who experience menopause symptoms will also have access to flexible working arrangements and counselling. All managers have been trained in menopause awareness and the council has undertaken to raise awareness of symptoms and urge all employers to encourage more women and men to take the menopause seriously. Women challenges in the workplace based on the priority of our members and their real life experience pushing the bargaining agenda into new areas, our ambition is to become the voice of all working women in Scotland and that we make our union strong and successful. Congress, please support this composite. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Fiona. Thank you. Southern.

JULIE MINAL (Southern): First-time delegate, first-time speaker. (*Applause*) President, Congress, between mood swings and added stress the menopause can be a minefield for even the strongest of family and personal relationships. On the journey of the menopause friends and family will sometimes express concern about their ability to offer the right support. This can sometimes lead to feelings of getting things wrong when it comes to saying or doing the right thing. Younger members of your family, in particular, can be left wondering, “Why, what have I done wrong?” This puts additional strain on relationships within the family group and outside of the family group as well.

Menopause has particular issues for members of the LGBT community. There can be a lack of professional knowledge as well as employer awareness so these members will particularly struggle to access the most relevant support. This will leave these members unprepared for everything that comes with menopause adding weight to the difficulties they often experience in the workplace. As a union we must ensure that reps and staff receive the best possible training to enable them to offer sound support and effective guidance. Courses have been designed and delivered and need to be considered for adoption as part of the education programme offered to members.

Our union has a role to play in challenging attitudes and ensuring that employers have the right procedures in place, and with good training workplace reps can raise issues and ensure that the workplace is risk-assessed to meet the needs of all employees going through the menopause. I have experienced ----

THE PRESIDENT: Julie, you have the red light. Can you just close?

JULIE MINAL (Southern): Two seconds. I have experienced the journey of the menopause and during that time I more than once recalled as a young person visiting my Gran and seeing her neighbour Mrs. Higgins at the back door looking flushed and whacking a tea towel on the front of her face.

THE PRESIDENT: Julie, can you wind up, please.

JULIE MINAL (Southern): Conversations about the change still go on. There is a way to go so can I ask you to support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I am sorry. I call the mover of Motion 124, please.

THE MENOPAUSE AND ANDROPAUSE MOTION 124

124. THE MENOPAUSE & ANDROPAUSE

This Congress notes that the menopause can have debilitating effects for some individuals. We need to talk openly about the fact that seven out of ten women of menopausal age are in work in the UK. The average age of menopause is 51 and the often challenging “transition” stage can start several years earlier. Women of course encounter the transition with varying degrees of impact and the effects vary from one individual to the next.

Today, the menopause is openly discussed in the media and has raised awareness. However, the real issue lies within the workplace, where Managers fail to recognise that the legislation states that employers must protect the health, safety, and welfare of all employees, includes women who are having a difficult time at work due to menopausal symptoms.

- Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires employers to ensure “the health, safety and welfare at work” of all employees;
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 place an overriding duty on employers to make workplaces suitable for the individuals who work in them;
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require the employer to undertake a suitable and sufficient assessment of risks and take action to prevent exposure to risks.
- The public sector equality duty places an obligation on all public bodies to promote gender equality and eliminate discrimination. Public service providers will need to assess how they can meet the needs of women using their service, and public sector employers, including local authorities, will need to consider the needs of all their staff and their employment practice.

We can't forget that some men experience similar symptoms to that of the menopause, which is known as andropause, but do not feel able to discuss their issues with management.

So why is this happening? Is it a case that employers have shied away from dealing with the issue?

This has been at a detriment to many of our members, who are being placed under guidance, disciplinary and some forced to take medical retirement.

We call on Congress to continue to campaign to force employers to change their policies and procedures to include the Menopause and Andropause, to protect our members in the workplace.

HARROW GENERAL BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

ANN JONES (London): President, Congress, for those who are not aware the andropause is the name given to the male version of the menopause. Some groups disapprove of this name as it suggests the sudden drop in hormone levels similar to that of the menopause when it is in fact a gradual process. Although the term andropause is controversial, as some research and medical journals refer to the male menopause as the andropause, for the purpose of Congress we will do the same. Both the menopause and andropause are natural processes in an adult's life. For some it is as the result of illness, but for most it is the next phase of our being after puberty and childbirth. Many women of menopausal age will have manageable effects or none at all, while for some it can be debilitating. The majority of men will have no effect or suffer in silence with a manageable effect, but again for a very few it can be debilitating.

So why are people so reluctant to speak about it, why are people embarrassed about it? Raising awareness can alleviate the stigma attached to this condition and we have seen this already happening as a result of media coverage. However, the real issue lies within the workplace where managers fail to recognise that these conditions are included in acts and regulations which state that employers must protect the health, safety, and welfare of all employees.

Management's lack of knowledge and blatant disregard for this issue is disadvantaging our members and putting them at risk and exposure to being victimised and harassed. Some of our members have complained about their managers not understanding their situation, that they are dismissive and unsupportive in this instance. Many found themselves being placed on capability for sickness or performance related issues, and denied the most basic request such as being placed

near a lavatory, allowed more frequent breaks, given a desk fan, or the installation of a water cooler in the office.

Such failures could result in claims against the employer, such as in the case of *Merchant v DP* at the Employment Tribunal. Miss Merchant was dismissed following a final warning for poor performance. She had previously given her manager a letter from her doctor explaining that she was going through the menopause and that it could affect her level of concentration at times. The manager chose not to carry out any further investigation of her symptoms in breach of DP's performance management policy. The tribunal upheld her claim as direct sex discrimination and unfair dismissal and held that the manager could never have adopted this bizarre and irrational approach with other non-female related conditions. The manager also wrongly decided that his wife's experience was apparently relevant evidence for his employee. This clearly shows that workplaces need to be educated.

Congress, we are calling for a change to working practices and to make it mandatory for places of work to hold awareness workshops, train their managers, and change their policies and procedures to include the menopause and andropause. I move.
(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ann. Seconder?

PAMELA BELGRAVE (London): President, Congress, two years ago a few of our members approached us as they were experiencing the effect of the menopause and felt that their managers were not supportive and that they felt bullied and harassed. One of our members felt that she was not able to discuss her concerns and symptoms with her male manager, which resulted in her being placed under capability for her work. We dealt with the issues and a few more but we realised that more needed to be done. We decided to organise an event in 2017 giving staff the opportunity to learn more about the menopause and andropause and provided them with information in leaflets, booklets, and a slide show. In addition to this, that same year we provided training for managers on the effects of the menopause and andropause. We were asked again in 2018 to provide more training to the managers that were unable to attend. This time we held a couple of workshops throughout the day as we had lots of interest. By us raising awareness and joint discussions with staff and management over the last two years we have seen a dramatic change in health of staff suffering from those conditions and now being treated fairly by management. At present we are in the process of negotiating a change to all our policies and procedures but we would like to secure recognition of this issue and ensure there is no room for managers making excuses in not supporting their staff. I second. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Pamela. Does anyone wish to speak against any of those motions? Then I ask Elaine Daley from the CEC to give our response.

ELAINE DALEY (CEC, Commercial Services): Congress, speaking on behalf of the CEC on Motions 118, Composite 5, and Motion 124.

On Motion 118, Ethnicity Pay Gap, we fully support the intent of this motion. In addition to asking GMB to campaign externally which will need to be in line with our resources, the motion calls for GMB to undertake internal work. We request that the

motion be referred to the CEC Organising Sub-Committee to investigate the practical implications of these points.

On Composite 5, Reporting the Race Pay Gap, which covers Motions 119 and 120, the CEC is supporting with a qualification. We fully support the intent of this motion and commit to taking action but the qualification is that this has to be in line with resources and a national plan for equality.

On Motion 124, the Menopause and Andropause, the CEC is supporting with a qualification. Many regions have developed campaigns and policies around the menopause. Currently, the Equality and Inclusion Department is developing a bargaining toolkit that will include best practice and model policies on supporting members in the workplace experiencing the menopause.

The qualification is that the NHS has disputed the labelling of certain mental and physical health disruptions that men experience in their middle-age as linked to an andropause. The CEC is therefore wishing to use caution in using the term “andropause” but keep abreast of medical terms that the NHS provides. That being said, the GMB has for a long time campaigned for better mental health in the workplace and produced guidance for members and reps on tackling this important issue for members of all genders.

Therefore, Congress, the CEC is asking for Motion 118 to be referred and for Composite 5 and Motion 124 to be supported with the qualifications I have outlined. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Does London Region accept the qualification on Composite 5? Yes? Thank you. Does London Region also accept the qualification on Motion 124? Yes? Thank you. I will do the vote on Composite 5. All those in favour please show. Anyone against? That is carried.

Composite Motion 5 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: I will do the vote on Composite 6, which the CEC is supporting. Thank you. You are ahead of me. Anyone against? Thank you.

Composite Motion 6 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Composite 7, again they are supporting. All those in favour please show. Anyone against?

Composite Motion 7 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 124, supported with a qualification. All those in favour please show. Thank you. Anyone against?

Motion 124 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Back to Motion 118, London Region, do you accept reference back? Yes? Thank you. Okay, all those in favour please show. Anyone against? Thank you.

Motion 118 was REFERRED.

EMPLOYMENT POLICY: EQUALITY AND INCLUSION (2)

THE PRESIDENT: We will now debate the second group of motions on Employment Policy, Equality and Inclusion. Please can speakers on the next group of motions prepare themselves, that is on Union Organisation: Equality and Inclusion, which is Motions 97, 99, 101, 102, 103 and 104. I call the mover of Composite 9.

DYSLEXIA AND DYSPRAXIA COMPOSITE MOTION 9

(Covering Motions 129 and 130)

129 — Dyslexia — London Region

130 — GMB Dyspraxia Campaign — Northern Region

This Congress is impressed by the GMB “Thinking Differently at Work” document produced by the Equality Through Inclusion Department and the industrial research and policy team. This support guide to dyspraxia was not only interesting but extremely helpful and practical.

This Congress applauds the way in which the GMB is tackling outdated views of a condition that affects children and adults alike.

Congress is appalled that countless thousands of our citizens and many GMB members have been written off currently and in the past by the way in which the education establishment and the lack of training for tutors and learners alike has meant that people with Dyspraxia have been failed.

Congress notes the really helpful and supportive work that Labour MPs have given to the GMB in launching an important part of our equality agenda.

Congress notes that the GMB’s Thinking Differently at Work campaign includes a really helpful dyspraxia guide. We call on Congress to support continued work for awareness and support for neurodiversity and ask that a similar document be produced for our dyslexic members.

Congress calls on all employers to create more inclusive environments, tackle discrimination in the workplace and address neurodiversity through their people management policies and practices.

Congress calls on Government to embrace our campaign as part of its measures regarding workplace and education support, and in respect of the Labour Party, Congress calls on its manifesto for Government at the next election to include the GMB Dyspraxia Campaign as part of its policies at work and in schools.

(Carried)

JANICE BARWICK (Northern): Congress, first-time delegate, first-time speaker. *(Applause)* I move Composite 9. Congress, our campaign about “Thinking Differently at Work” is really important for any worker trying to cope with their

dyspraxia. Dyspraxia is linked to problems with spatial awareness. People with dyspraxia may have problems with their eye co-ordination. People with dyspraxia can and do devise ways of coping with their daily tasks. Many people do not understand that dyspraxia happens before your born. A person with dyspraxia may have also been diagnosed with other conditions, such as autism.

Congress, while work to help people with dyspraxia has improved, some great work has taken place, the fact is that out *there* in the workplace, in schools and colleges, there is still a lot of ignorance about the condition. There are some great models, such as the Labour MP in our region, Emma Lewell-Buck. She will tell you that as a child she was told she was clumsy, she was naughty when she went to school. Then, after working in industry for six years, Emma got herself a social work qualification. She wasn't diagnosed with dyspraxia until the age of 27. She then became a Labour MP a few years later. Emma is a shining light in telling people that they can achieve whatever they want to achieve, they can do whatever they want to do and they can be whoever they want to be, despite the system failing them.

Many have been written off, but if we can get our party, the Labour Party, to commit to include or campaign in its policies for the next election, we have a lot of hope. With the Union's help we can give members and their families a brighter and better future. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Janice. Seconder?

RICKY JONES (London): Congress, I am a dyslexic. As a child I suffered from dyspraxia. I remember trying to bowl a cricket ball ahead of me and it always ending up over *there*. I remember when we played football, instead of going round the people I would go through them like they were 10-pin bowling and knock them all over. So those are some of the things. I couldn't do up my shoelaces until I got into the juniors. Dyspraxic people have these issues. When I was at school, it was known as the "clumsy child syndrome". It is difficult for those people to have to face that.

As a dyslexic, I remember in school being told I was lazy or stupid. As an adult it took me until I was 41 — I'm now 53 — to be diagnosed with dyslexia. In that time, I have become a Labour councillor, I have three diplomas at level 4 and I am trade union official for my own union as well as being proud to be part of the GMB. (*Applause*) We have come a long way, but we still have a long way to go. People who suffer from neurodiverse conditions do get support within the workplace from an organisation called Access to Work but they are supporting at the level at which they are already working. What happens when those people want to go for promotion? They either have to do it on their own or they don't have the confidence. I am one of those people. I have been an organiser at the very lowest level for 10 years, not having the confidence to go up the ladder. We need to do more to support people going up the ladder so that they have access to work. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ricky. I call the mover of Motion 131.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS PASSPORTS MOTION 131

131. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT PASSPORTS

This Congress calls upon the GMB to campaign with the TUC and other partners for a wider introduction of Reasonable Adjustment Passports for Employees who require adjustments at work due to health conditions, impairment or disability. We also request that greater emphasis be placed on the importance of such passports in order to protect and enhance the rights of those with on-going medical conditions, impairments or disability, whether visible or invisible.

The Reasonable Adjustment Passport should be protected in Employment Law for example as a compulsory element in employment contracts. This is to ensure that employees are not constantly having to fight for their rights and that employers meet their obligations in relation to the Reasonable Adjustments that have previously been agreed.

We believe that with the high turnover of management in some companies, the Passport will act as a way of ensuring that any adjustments agreed previously are not diminished by new Managers. They also offer some protection and peace of mind for employees who have at times found it difficult to obtain the necessary workplace adjustments.

Furthermore, increasingly we are seeing sick or disabled workers having to move their employment more frequently. The Passport allows employees to bring with them a clear indication of the types of adjustment they require to perform their work. Furthermore we believe that these adjustments should be protected in Law so that prospective employees are not disadvantaged in any place of work.

We ask the Equalities Forums at Regional and National level to look at adopting this as a GMB Campaign on behalf of members facing disadvantage because of their medical history, disability or impairment.

Q22 BRANCH

North West & Irish Region

(Carried)

KEVIN FLANAGAN (North West & Irish): Congress, I'm an old-time delegate and an old-time speaker! I am pleased to move this very important motion. In a way the motion has been overtaken by the developments since we drafted this motion at the end of last year. I pay tribute to the GMB and its excellent Disability Report, which we have just debated. Well done! It's a brilliant report. I also pay tribute to all those who have worked on the Reasonable Adjustment Passports and the Neurodiversity In The Workplace Toolkit. If you haven't got it, get it. I went to the workshop yesterday and what an excellent piece of work it is. *Here* it is. If you haven't got it, take it with you. It's a vital toolkit.

Congress, 391,000 disabled workers — that is one in 10 disabled people — dropped out of the UK workforce last year. A further 555,000 disabled workers — one in seven — started work again last year. The introduction of Reasonable Adjustment Disability Passports is essential. It will help more than one million workers in this country and a lot more besides. It is important that the rights of disabled workers are recognised and valued because people are people and they should be recognised and valued. It's not their disability but it's what they contribute to society and to the world of work. That's what we value! *(Applause)*

I have met so many disabled workers who have been totally frustrated because they have got reasonable adjustments but then a new management come in and all those adjustments can go out of the window. Many disabled workers already have

frustrations and difficulties. Why do we add to it? A very important task of the Disability Adjustment Passports is that they can carry it with them. It is a live agreement and they can actually ensure they can get the rights and recognitions which they deserve.

Colleagues and comrades, it is time at our 130th birthday to make sure that we make this one of the key issues in the Movement today. If it is not enough, more than 30% of workers who are disabled receive less pay! What a disgrace in a modern society. The average for women is 7% less pay merely because they are disabled. Why are we allowing this to happen any more? This state of affairs has to come to an end.

As it says in the Joint Statement, the TUC Report, Reasonable Adjustment and Disability Passports is the second book you need to take with you. It's a very good report and congratulations to the team again on that. *This* is one of the best reports that I have seen. It is not perfect, but I can tell you that it's a great foundation on which to start to get the rights of disabled workers. As it says in it, our vision is where all workplaces are accessible and inclusive, and where every worker is able to participate fully and equally. That's the minimum we can request, isn't it? Isn't that the minimum we should request? Fully and accessible workplaces.

Colleagues, how many in this room are activists — stick your hand up — have actually dealt with a disability issue in the past year? I think that's carried. Thank you very much.

THE PRESIDENT: Kevin, you've got the red light.

KEVIN FLANAGAN: That shows you how important it is. Support this motion, support these reports and put it into practice. (*Cheers and applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: You just got in there in time. Well done. Secunder?

LINDA MERCER (North West & Irish): Congress, I second Motion 131 — Reasonable Adjustments Passports. We are an ageing workforce, and with age comes disabilities. We have people who have disabilities and, as they age, their disabilities grow worse, and they need more and more reasonable adjustments, and they are reasonable. If each and every person has a passport of reasonable adjustments, then every time they change job or they move up within the workforce, they will be able to pass that passport on to the new management team. We are dealing with a case at the moment of a man who has worked for 20 years in the engineering department. He is a supervisor and he is a very well-respected member of staff. He has done his work very well, but he has a hidden disability. A member of staff has left and he has not been replaced, and his manager has changed over the years. He is being pressured to do more and more work because his manager didn't realise that he had reasonable adjustments. If he had that passport then he would be able to give that to his manager and not have to explain what his disabilities are and how his employers need to support him.

There are plenty of others as we move office and move around the authority, or even change your job and you go and work for somebody else. If you have that passport with you, you would just be able to say, "This is what I need, and I can do this job",

because no matter what disability you have, in most cases you can do that job or a better job. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Linda. I call the mover of Motion 134, please.

MENTAL HEALTH AND LGBT+ PEOPLE MOTION 134

134. MENTAL HEALTH AND LGBT+ PEOPLE

This Congress, LGBT people are more likely to suffer from mental health problems than heterosexual people. This is a result of numerous factors such as discrimination and homophobia.

Previous research suggests that people of the LGBT community are more likely to suffer from a mental health problem than wider society. Despite changing attitudes in the UK being more accepting of the LGBT community, LGBT people are more likely to suffer from a mental health problem than wider society.

Trade unions have often, throughout history, been a great ally to the LGBT community, therefore this motion calls for greater campaigning in the LGBT community to raise awareness of mental health issues and what help they can get.

ASDA STORES BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

SUE WALKER (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Motion 134 — Mental Health and the LGBT+ People. This motion is calling for greater campaigning in the LGBT community about mental health issues and where to seek help when needed. Mental health is a massive issue in all walks of life. It is like a cancer. It's not bothered about race, age, whether you're male or female, if you're a low-income family or affluent and, outwardly, appear to be behaving as normal.

The LGBT+ community also has to deal with the added pressures and prejudices of discrimination and homophobia. Many signs of mental health do not appear until it is too late. GMB has always been at the forefront of diversity and equality and it has a brilliant equality network. We need to use the network to reach out to the LGBT+ community to let them know that they can get help if they need it. Literature could be distributed at the many PRIDE events that GMB holds every year. We need to reach out to raise awareness and stop the suffering caused by this illness to our LGBT+ brothers and sisters. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sue. Secunder?

GINA HARDING (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): President and Congress, some of us identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. However, LGBT people can be at a higher risk of experiencing a mental health problem than the wider population. As identified, there are many factors that can cause this, such as bullying, discrimination or even following the experience of rejection and hostilities from others. The LGBT and mental health connection is particularly clear with LGBT youth. The worse part is that they often do not have the resources to cope with it. Teachers and employers

may not understand well enough to help, or they agree with the attitudes expressed by those perpetrating the bullying.

In addition, research has shown that a high percentage of gay men and women have experienced homophobic bullying in the workplace. A total of 640 tribunal claims on the grounds of sexual orientation were accepted in the last 12 months, according to ACAS.

Furthermore, Stonewall's message is that workers do not perform to their full potential if they are not being themselves. Because of the connection between LGBT and mental health, it is important that the community is aware of the potential mental health risk and the help available. Depression is a lonely place, but no one should have to suffer alone. Self-acceptance can be hard. Stigma can cause an individual to keep their sexuality a secret. Isolation, stress, anger and anxiety often come as a result of this. Greater awareness and education is essential for those struggling to understand who they are.

Finally, if you, like me, are LGBT and suffer from a mental illness, bring it up, speak up and feel sure that your voice will be heard. After all, we have been and always will be a community of fighters. It is about time we dared to show our battle scars. We ask the Congress, please, to support the motion to allow activists to raise awareness and campaign to fight the stigma. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gina. Well done. I call the mover of Composite 10.

ACCESS TO BUILDINGS

COMPOSITE 10

(Covering Motions 135 and 436)

135 — Access to Buildings (London)

436 — Accessible Buildings (National Equality Forum)

This Congress acknowledges that many people with disabilities, especially those with mobility issues continue to find access whether on arrival or when at the building still an issue. This Congress is concerned at the difficulties our members with mobility problems face when trying to access their workplace or visiting other premises.

Whilst Congress welcomes efforts to make working smarter, including home working, we are concerned that not enough reasonable adjustments are made to make buildings more accessible.

Among the problems/ Issues our members encounter are:

- Lack of truly accessible public transport/ issues with public transport to get there
- Lack of enough accessible parking if driving: and allocated parking places near workplaces which members may need to access;
- Lack of working lifts and lifts that can be used in a fire evacuation, including not installing lifts able to be operated during fire evacuations;
- toilets that are truly accessible
- Lack of consultation on needed reasonable adjustments;
- clear guidance in an accessible form of how to evacuate a building safely.

We call upon Congress to lead campaigns both within GMB and with our Labour political colleagues. The aim of the campaigns is to raise and highlight the difficulties our members are facing and to ensure that enough resources are allocated.

This Congress calls upon the CEC along with the NEF to develop a toolkit that can be used to assess both existing and new buildings and to work with CEC to ensure that all GMB buildings are assessed for accessibility but that any new buildings being bought/rented by GMB meet the criteria.

Congress further instructs the CEC to campaign to ensure an incoming Labour Government has a clear commitment to deliver proper accessible buildings ensuring planning permission includes duties not only for new buildings but ones being renovated and extended.

(Carried)

BRIAN SHAW (London, and National Equality Forum): Congress, I move Composite 10. This motion, I believe, adds to the Special Report on Disability and takes us forward in what we need to do in the forthcoming period. All too often people with disabilities, whether movable or hidden, are excluded not because they don't want to work or be involved in GMB activities but because plans, be it public transport or buildings, have not fully taken into account the needs of disabled people to ensure accessibility.

The GMB needs to be at the forefront of campaigning with the Labour Party and, hopefully, soon a Labour Government. This shower can't keep going, can they? That ensures that resources and legislative changes are based, as Emma said, on the social model of disability, with GMB ability members leading on this issue.

Also, we, as GMB, need to ensure that we, too, look to ensure that the GMB has the vision to ensure that we are not only for members but as an employer an exemplar employer around disability. Let's use the regional self-organise group and ability groups to write the toolkit to ensure that it does not just sit on the shelf in regional offices but is used by all and updated on a regular basis. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder?

GORDON BRUNNING (London): Congress, I'm the Chair of Ability, London Region, Disability Forum, seconding Composite 10. The essence of this motion is clear and simple. Many of our disabled members, especially those with mobility issues, still continue to find access to private and commercial buildings whether on arrival or inside the building an issue, with a clear lack of fully disabled toilets, public transport, lifts and clear signage. Regrettably, they still have to face and deal with the indignity and embarrassment of having to ask to get help to move around and into the building.

We call on GMB Congress to develop a new campaign to cross the wider trade union family to raise and highlight the difficulties that disabled workers often face on a daily basis; to instruct the CEC to campaign and lobby this Government and any incoming Government — a Labour government, we hope — to ensure that it has a clear commitment to deliver accessible, private and commercial buildings. Your full support for this composite motion is essential, but what is equally essential is that, as a trade union, we get our own house in order and make it fully accessible both into and around for disabled members and workers who visit that building, and our buildings. Please support the motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gordon. I call the mover of Motion 136.

MANDATORY WORKPLACE TRAINING ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT MOTION 136

136. MANDATORY WORKPLACE TRAINING ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT

This Congress is concerned that the high levels of sexual harassment cases reported annually to police remains stable and unacceptably high despite all efforts to prevent such intolerable or offensive conduct. Statistics have indicated that at least 3.1% of women of working age have been subjected to such unwanted sexual harassment in the last year.

Conference calls on the GMB to campaign for a change in the law, making it a compulsory requirement on employers to facilitate 'Sexual Harassment Awareness Training' in the workplace, this is in expectation of educating all employees on the subject with the hope it will have an impact on reducing these appallingly high statistics.

MID GLAMORGAN C&T M63 BRANCH
Wales & South West Region

(Carried)

JENNIFER SMITH (GMB Wales & South West): Congress, I move Motion 136. We live in a day of political correctness, promoting equality where many in our society are accepting of new ideology and are slowly changing their outdated opinions and prejudices. Most of us are already accepting a society where women and minority groups have the freedom and recognition to be equal. Thanks to the successes of past campaigns, the law has changed, allowing us all to live and be accepted on equal status. However, the battle to change deep-rooted presumptions of bigotry has yet to catch up. Outdated behaviour that was once accepted as banter or a little fun is still prevalent in our society by those who fail to see the harm and distress that their actions cause, or that such banter can develop into more serious, distasteful and illegal actions.

The numbers available on sexual harassment is evidence that there is much work to be done in educating and changing unacceptable, intolerable and now illegal behaviour. It should be a concern that official figures are not showing any reduction in these heinous crimes. Based on recent police recordings, 1.3% of all women aged between 16 and 59 are still likely to experience some type of sexual assault.

The motion is calling for the GMB to lobby the Government and get a change to the relevant legislation. We require all employers to introduce and undertake sexual-harassment awareness training. The training package will, hopefully, raise the profile of those heinous crimes to show any prospective perpetrator that it is no longer acceptable to be overly discourteous, even with innuendo whilst at work as such behaviour can often and does lead to more serious infringements of another's dignity. As women of working age will be most likely victims of unwanted attention in the workplace, this is an obvious place to start training and the re-education of those deep-rooted prejudices in the hope that the message will carry through everyday society and have a positive impact on reducing these appalling high numbers that have not changed in recent years. Such changes should be mandatory to all employees, despite their gender, as we know men can also become victims of such

unwanted attention. Around 140,000 cases of sexual assault upon men will be reported in the year ahead.

Let's get re-education on the agenda so it is not only equality in the eye of the law but in total acceptance of society where behaviour and attitudes have evidently changed. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jennifer. Secunder?

GWYLAN BRINKWORTH (GMB Wales & South West): Congress, seconding Motion 136. President and delegates, I have dealt with a number of cases involving sexual harassment, and there has always been the suggestion that it has been "just a bit of banter". That phrase is increasingly used to excuse inappropriate, unacceptable and usually vile behaviour.

So let me tell you what can happen when we ignore such behaviour. I was introduced to many people when I started working and one or two stood out. The one I remembered most is because I was warned that he was "a bit of a leech"! This wasn't a woman pulling me to one side and quietly alerting me to this fact, but this was a male colleague, in earshot of others, who all nodded their agreement. I was a little shocked and very uncomfortable, but their casual attitude left me feeling unable to say or do anything.

Fast forward a few years and he no longer works there. It was only after he had sexually assaulted a colleague. This story is so common, except, of course, not all of them get dismissed. In fact, many of them don't even get reported. There are a number of reasons why women don't report sexual harassment. There is the historical taboo on talking about it, or because they feel shame, embarrassment and have a very real fear of not being believed. There is a general lack of knowledge, understanding or awareness, and this applies as much to the women who have put up with it for so long that they just accept it.

Recently, I listened to a woman make a joke of sexual harassment as part of an after-dinner speech. It is this type of behaviour that we need to be tackling; the laughing and joking, the turning of a blind eye. If we don't speak out, we are all complicit with the perpetrator. If we tackle this in the workplace, it will seep out into society. Then society will come to look back on what has been exposed by the "Me Too" campaign with the same revulsion that we have for the casual racism that was the norm when you think back to the signs "No blacks, No Irish, No dogs". We need there to be training and it needs to be mandatory. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Does anyone wish to speak in opposition to these motions? (*No response*) No. In that case, I ask Margaret Clarke from the CEC to give our position.

MARGARET CLARKE (CEC, Commercial Services): Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC on Composite 10, Access to Buildings, which includes Motions 135 and 436. The CEC is asking for this composite to be supported with qualifications. The CEC fully supports the aim of making buildings as accessible as they can be. We support this motion with a small qualifications. These are as

follows. We agree that campaign materials should be produced. However, we believe that a checklist may be more suited to the task than a tool kit, although this is an issue that should be explored by the Equality Through Inclusion Department.

All reasonable efforts, including pro-active efforts, should be made to ensure that GMB's own premises are accessible, although we know it is not always possible to anticipate every individual's accessibility requirements in advance. In addition, we note that there may be some rare cases where it might not be possible to make modifications for accessibility purposes. It might apply, for example, in the case of a listed building which requires planning permission before alterations can be made. With these minor qualifications, we ask that Congress supports this motion. Please accept the qualifications on this composite for the reasons I have explained. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Margaret. London, do you accept the qualifications? (*Agreed*) So we will take the vote on Composite 9, Motion 131, Motion 134, Composite 10 and Motion 136. The CEC are supporting them all. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? They are all carried.

Composite 9 was CARRIED.

Motion 131 was CARRIED.

Motion 134 was CARRIED.

Composite 10 was CARRIED.

Motion 136 was CARRIED.

UNION ORGANISATION: EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

THE PRESIDENT: We will now debate motions on Union Organisation: Equality and Inclusion. Please can speakers on the next group of motions prepare themselves; that is on Employment Policy: Rights at Work, which involves Motions 191, 192, Composite 14 and Motion 195. As a note, Motion 199 has been withdrawn. I call the mover of Motion 97.

WORKPLACE ENGAGEMENT MOTION 97

97. WORKPLACE ENGAGEMENT

This Congress notes that membership engagement is vital to ensure we remain a vibrant trade union, in touch with grassroots.

Congress notes that whilst the Self Organised Groups (SOG's) organise fantastic innovative events, designed to build capacity around various equality issues, more should be done to bring SOG's directly into workplaces.

The aims and objectives of this engagement will be primarily to develop the profile of the SOG/GMB in a positive manner and will also act as an organising opportunity to recruit new members.

We call upon congress to ensure each SOG organise at least one workplace engagement a year.

EALING GMB BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

(The motion was formally moved and formally seconded from the floor)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I call Motion 99.

EQUALITY MONITORING FORM MOTION 99

99. EQUALITY MONITORING FORM

I have no ideas to motions at Congress that GMB internal equality monitoring forms need to be updated/changed as it is missing people nationalities/identities. I spoke to a few people (semi survey) they expressed that they are not happy to tick the box 'other' because they feel like aliens.

For example: Asia British – Caribbean descendant from the Caribbean Islands.
Another example: South American.

This conference notes that it is vital that the GMB gathers accurate equality monitoring data for our members. It is also important for GMB members who come from minority or under-represented groups to feel included in the GMB. The current GMB equality monitoring form does not include groups from Asian British/Caribbean backgrounds many of whom descend from Asian people taken by the slave trade to the Caribbean to labour in mines and sugar plantations. There is also no specific option to identify as South American; the GMB has a significant number of members and activists from the countries of South America.

These conference calls on the CEC to add "Asian/Caribbean British" and "South American" to the union's internal monitoring form to ensure these important groups feel more included.

D11 SOUTHERN HEALTHCARE BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

TAMARA POWELL (Southern): President and Congress, I'm a first-time speaker and first-time delegate. *(Applause)* I move Motion 99 — Equality Monitoring Form. The GMB internal equality monitoring form needs to be updated and changed, as it is missing people's nationality and identity. I spoke to a few people — I actually did a semi survey — who expressed that they are not happy to tick the box "Other" because they feel like aliens, but they are more than that, than the "Other" box. For example, there is not a box for Asia — British Caribbean, there's not a box from them. They are descendants from the Caribbean Islands. Another example is South American. There is no tick box for them either.

This Conference notes that it is vital that the GMB gathers accurate equality monitoring data for our members. It is also important for GMB members who come from ethnic minorities or under-represented groups to feel included in the GMB. The current GMB equality monitoring form does not include groups from Asian British/Caribbean backgrounds, many of whom descended from the Asian people taken by the slave trade to the Caribbean to labour in mines and sugar plantations. There is also no option to identify as South American; the GMB has a significant number of members and activists from the countries of South America.

This Conference calls on the CEC to add “Asian/Caribbean British” and also “South American” to the union’s internal monitoring form to ensure these important groups feel more included, because they are more than “Other”. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Can I have a seconder for Motion 99?

EMILY BROTHERS (Southern): Congress, I am seconding Motion 99. It is important that any data monitoring that is undertaken by the GMB is aligned with standard practice, guidance from the Office of National Statistics and also the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Equality data monitoring is important so that we know whether GMB is representative at leadership levels, here at Congress, representing and organising in all kinds of things that we do. That improves our decision making. It reaches out to different communities and makes us more diverse. It is important. I looked at the data in our Congress packs about delegations, and I was interested to note that there is significant under-representation; far more men than women, far more non-disabled people. The proportion of disabled people in the country is 20% but barely half that figure is represented here today. 254 delegates are heterosexual, yet we have only about 15 LGBT + tick the gender identity box. It means that more than 150 people are still working out their sexual orientation. That may be because they are not competent to be open about their sexual orientation, or many of them in the union or wider.

Attack on attack on the LGBT community comes our way. Only yesterday, in a 32-page document from the Vatican, we were told about gender identity being “modern thinking”. But God creates the individual and yet we don’t have through our personal autonomy a right to express. I was educated in a Catholic boarding school. It was a special school for blind and partially-sighted children where I was isolated. I couldn’t express my gender identity or sexual orientation, and I don’t want that for other people. So I say to Pope Francis and the Catholic Church, but also to the other doomers of despair about sexual orientation and gender identity, that it is important to be compassionate and inclusive —

THE PRESIDENT: Emily, you are on a red light.

EMILY BROTHERS: — in the way that GMB is as a trade union. That is the solidarity that we as a union bring to our cause.

Congress, I find it very upsetting as somebody from the LGBT community —

THE PRESIDENT: Emily, you are on a red. Could you finish up, please?

EMILY BROTHERS: — that we are in a situation where people are not confident in being themselves. That is why that we, as a union, should have the structure of sector monitoring in order to give people the confidence so that we can go forward with diversity. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: I call Motion 101. Can the mover come to the rostrum?

BOYCOTT THE DAILY MAIL

MOTION 101

101. BOYCOTT THE DAILY MAIL

This Conference is increasingly disturbed by the ongoing homophobic and Transphobic attacks that the Daily Mail, the Mail on Saturday and The Mail on Sunday keep on making against the LGBTI+ community.

The Daily Mail, rarely publish any positive LGBTI+ stories so it's always one sided.

GMB should, with the support of all Shout! Groups, launch a campaign against The Daily Mail, The Mail on Saturday and The Mail on Sunday to end such homophobic and Transphobic attacks, comments and remarks and to get people to boycott buying their papers.

G36 SECURITY BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

PAUL SONY (Southern): Congress, I move Motion 101 — Boycott the *Daily Mail*.

We are increasingly disturbed by the ongoing homophobic and transphobic attacks that the *Daily Mail*, the *Mail on Saturday* and the *Mail on Sunday* and the *Mail on line* keep on making against the LGBT+ community.

The *Daily Mail* rare publishes any positive LGBT+ stories so it has always been one-sided. They have published stories where they have outed people, especially those who work in the public sector and whose job it is to protect us. They have published stories but used images of the wrong people. They often publish negative stories, if not weekly then on a monthly basis. We can look at what is happening in Birmingham.

Before I say more, I need to point out — it was a shock — that they did give a rare glimpse of publishing a positive story around Remembrance Day.

When the *Daily Mail* joined forces with Nectar, many Nectar LGBTI members cancelled their membership because of the association with the *Daily Mail*. While we believe in free speech, what the *Daily Mail*, the *Mail on Saturday*, the *Mail on Sunday* and the *Mail on line* are doing isn't fair, and it's time that we put a stop to this discrimination. GMB should, with the support of all Shout groups launch a campaign against the *Daily Mail*, the *Mail on Saturday*, the *Mail on Sunday* and the *Mail on line* to end homophobic and transphobic attacks, comments and remarks and to get people to boycott buying their papers. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Is there a seconder for Motion 101?

BEVERLEY GOWERS (Southern): Congress, first-time delegate and first-time speaker. I am seconding Motion 101 — Boycott the *Daily Mail*. My branch is B50 Sussex, and it's located just down the road and where, alongside other activists and reps, I attended great equalities training. LGBT+ members are identified as those who suffer from greater exclusion and inequalities, but not only that, hatred and violence.

GMB across all regions fights to ensure equality and inclusion for all our members. Equality is the foundation from which our shared values are built. GMB, as it states, “Grow, Build, Change”. Those words behind me, whilst they cannot fall off that wall, should not fall away from GMB’s pledge to every member. Let that strategy include campaigning strongly against negative one-sided rhetoric wherever it is voiced. The right-wing press always seeks to try and divide, spreading fear and prejudice, so let’s campaign. Let’s take action. Let’s boycott the biased *Daily Mail* with its negative with its negative and harmful reporting. Let’s stand together and speak up, uniting against homophobic and transphobic views. Please support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT (June Minnery): I call the mover of Motion 102.

STOP SEXISM! MOTION 102

102. STOP SEXISM!

This Branch is concerned that sexism is everywhere including our Union. GMB should lead the way into eradicating sexism by starting with ourselves. From sexist language, behavior and stereotypes which we have all been guilty of at some time to the worst kind; sexual harassment we as a Union *must* lead by example.

This Branch believes that we start with the basics, **sexist language**. The use of sexist, misogynist language - which denigrates girls and femaleness - is commonplace. Language which associates negative characteristics with being female “you throw like a girl”, or more related to the union “go make the tea love.” – and more positive characteristics with being male – “man-up” “grow a pair”.

The accepted and often casual use of language that puts down girls/women fuels harmful and narrow ideas about what it means to be a man or a woman in society today. It contributes to a conducive context for sexist attitudes and behaviours – including sexual harassment.

This Branch calls for all those in the Union to stop the use of this sexist language, to be mindful of how we speak to one another, not just women but to men too and run a campaign on how we treat one another in the workplace and training courses to help us deliver this.

L16 LB GREENWICH BRANCH
Southern Region

(*Carried*)

VICTORIA MAHER (Southern): Congress, I’m a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. (*Applause*) This is in remembrance of my granddad who was a shop steward of the Stevedores & Dockers Union on the River Clyde. He would have been very, very proud of me today. I move Motion 102 — Stop Sexism in the workplace!

Sexism in the workplace is an everyday occurrence for most women, and as female GMB representatives we often come across it all too often in our workplaces, not just when we represent our members but from our colleagues in the union, too. It is hidden sexism in the workplace language that is the problem, or as I like to call it “unconscious sexism”. We have come a long way over the years in fighting for our rights and to be treated equally, although we are not quite there yet. Things are getting better, yet sexism remains in the corners of the words and phrases we use at work. 1970’s banter, such as calling a woman “Honey” or “Love” is as out of fashion

as cave paintings. Particularly in the workplace, sexist language and behaviours are just no longer accepted.

A colleague experienced sexism from the heart of the union. Feeling nervous about speaking in front of a room full of people for the first time, she was told by a senior regional organiser, “Just stand behind your colleague” — a man! — “and look pretty”. This is from someone who should have known better. Another regional officer, upon greeting a female rep, said, “Oh, and how is this beautiful lady today?” A male colleague would never have been greeted in this manner. A firm handshake is good enough for man. Well, it sure as hell is good enough for me and any other woman to be greeted in this way, too. So why is it that all male colleagues feel it is okay to call you in for a kiss on the first time meeting you? It’s uncomfortable, unwanted and often delivered by someone who is not even good looking. *(Laughter)* Familiarity breeds contempt!

We in the GMB lead the way in empowering our members to stand up for themselves, to fight for their rights and to be heard, to have a voice in their workplace and fight for equality and pay. Yet we need to lead the way by eradicating this behaviour and language amongst ourselves.

Last year research from the Trades Union Congress and the Everyday Sexism Project found that 52% of women had experienced unwanted behaviour at work, including groping, sexual advances and inappropriate jokes. Amongst the young women, aged 16 to 24, the proportion was 63%. The number of women reporting sexual harassment at work halved from 2013 to 2015, while calls to the ACAS helpline relating to sex discrimination increased by 14%. We can see that there is still a long way to go before it is eradicated in the workplace. So I’m calling on Congress to support this motion so that every single one of us is mindful of the language that we use towards one another. We need to make sure that, as of today, the GMB leads the way in changing the attitudes and language that we use towards one another and treat each other in the manner that we would want to be treated. This is for all the women who are too shy to speak. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

BEVERLEY GOWERS (Southern): First-time delegate, second-time speaker. *(Applause)* I second Motion 102 — Stop Sexism!

Congress, language and how we act is important. It is as a union how we grow and gain power. This motion is asking us to be mindful of how we speak to each other. It is about us looking inwards in order that we can take the fight outwards, the fight to stop sexism. We live in a patriarchal society. Women every day face inequality. We have already heard about unequal pay, discrimination and hardship but women, and indeed men, don’t want to be defined by their gender in order to be diminished. Let’s all stop contributing to sexism. Let’s call it out whenever and wherever we hear or feel it. Let’s treat each other with dignity and respect that we all demand. We are not asking, we are demanding. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I now call Motion 103 — Just a Ball Game?

JUST A BALL GAME? MOTION 103

103. JUST A BALL GAME?

This Congress notes that despite advancement and acceptance in certain social contexts homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse still occurs for many lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people within a sporting environment. This discrimination often becomes hate crime and affects athletes, managers, club staff, match day casual workers and public alike.

There is still much to be done to combat the discrimination, provide education through the many benefits of equality, inclusion and diversity to help put an end to exclusion, bullying or physical violence.

Research shows half of football/sports fans say they have heard homophobic abuse at matches. Many football fans think having a gay player on a team would make other team mates feel uncomfortable, they also believe gay players should “keep it to themselves” while some said they would stop watching their team if they signed a gay player.

JBG? has been at the forefront in challenging HBT bullying and abuse for 8 years and their project work is a great way to showcase LGBT+ inclusion and visibility. In addition to this there is a captive audience of potential new trade union members, and a chance to showcase GMB trade union equalities workload and educate around trade union history through joint communications.

We call on Congress for GMB to work with existing LGBT+ campaign organisation “JUST A BALL GAME?” to help eradicate this intolerance from our stadia, Regions and communities.

B19 BRANCH
North West & Irish Region

(Carried)

MATTHEW DENTON (North West & Irish): Congress, I move Motion 103 — Just a Ball Game? We would like to bring to your attention that, despite advances in certain social contexts, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse still occurs towards many lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people within the sporting environment. This discrimination often becomes a hate crime and affects athletes, managers, club staff, match-day staff, casual workers and the general public alike.

A new survey of football fans who identify as being LGBT+ have attended live matches and found that two-thirds of respondents experienced incidents of physical and verbal abuse, homophobic or transphobic chanting and comments from other fans during the 2017 and '18 football season. Furthermore, the survey discovered that perceived LGBT+ fans experienced some reticence in reporting such incidents. Two-thirds of home fans and three-quarters of away fans at games had not reported the homophobic and transphobic chanting. These stats, sadly, echo those of the Just a Ball Game? Findings, conducted in 2010.

Last week news reports showed the disturbing attack on two young women, simply on a bus, being themselves, in a cosmopolitan London environment. We call on our allies to support an LGBT+ community to speak up and speak out, however small or insignificant any comments or abuse may seem so the risk of these mindsets festering can be curtailed.

Like a lot of young people from Liverpool, I have enjoyed playing football from a young age. I play 5 aside, 11 aside, Saturday and Sunday league and I enjoy sport in general. I came out as a gay man at the age of 17. I was lucky in respect of having the love, care and support of family and friends to help me through that period of time. However, unfortunately, the game I loved to play so much was not as supportive. For various reasons I stopped playing football, the game I loved so much. The stats don't lie, unfortunately, as I myself found out.

It was not until five years ago that I started playing football again when I found the Mersey Marauders, Liverpool's LGBT football team. This gave me so much more confidence and a renewed sense of wanting to make a difference. That led me on to involving myself within the inclusive and supportive nature of the GMB union further, through the likes of the National and Regional Equality forums and our own self-organised group, GMB Shout North West. This has enabled me to meet some lovely and supportive people, such as Lisa Ryan, my equalities officer, and Dave Hope. This is where I also met Lindsay England. I have seen the excellent work that she had been doing with her campaign Just a Ball Game? I can honestly say that I have never met such a dedicated, committed and passionate person as Lindsay England. The work she has completed, the journey she has made and her dedication inspires me further. *(Applause)*

Teaming up with Just a Ball Game? and embracing a Stronger Together partnership could be the first steps for GMB regions and branches in helping make a difference towards a better educated, inclusive and more diverse workforce, providing guidance and solutions to grow, build and change.

Two weeks ago, Just a Ball Game? founder Lindsay England was honoured with the Points of Light Award by No. 10 Downing Street for 17 years of service to LGBT inclusion in sport. If a Tory Government can recognise this workload, then so, too, can a progressive GMB trade union. Please support Just a Ball Game? and this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT (Barbara Plant): Thank you. I call the seconder.

BILLY GOULDING (North West & Irish): Congress, I am supporting Motion 103 — Just a Ball Game? This Congress notes that it is estimated that between 4% and 6% of the workforce of the UK identifies as being LGBT+. A football club or any other sporting environment is no different. It is a workplace for many service industries under one banner. Evidence shows that the sporting environment is festured with persistent and pervasive discrimination against LGBT+ people, many of whom self-select into occupations as they find it easier to manage their sexual orientation.

Giving support to key players, such as Just a Ball Game? builds on their 'stronger together' partnership. Overcoming hurdles, perseverance and achievements are traits long embraced by trade unions.

A ready-made campaign supported by GMB can look back on the growth of inclusion in society, which they have been part of and also look ahead to the many challenges

that may lie along the road to full inclusion. More debate, less hierarchy and progress inclusively means innovation.

It is 2019 and yet we still see lesbian, bisexual and transgender female athletes put in a box, told they are too fast and too strong, even though their genetics make them elite' and that they must harm themselves with drugs to regulate and perform, to be allowed to compete with more feminine-looking female athletes with less ability. Meanwhile, men with similar genetics are held up as worthy champions. Please support Just a Ball Game? and this motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Billy. Just in time. I call the mover of Motion 104.

SURVEY OF WORKPLACE TRANS DISCRIMINATION MOTION 104

104. SURVEY OF WORKPLACE TRANS DISCRIMINATION

This Congress calls for the CEC to set up a working party to look at Trans discrimination in the workplace.

AVON & WESSEX A55 BRANCH
Wales & South West Region

(Referred)

ANNE LEADER (GMB Wales & South West): Congress and President, I move Motion 104. Even though UK law protects transgender workers from discrimination, a third of employers admit that they are less likely to hire a transgender person. Although we are in 2019 and diversity is often celebrated in all walks of British life, a recent survey illustrates the prejudice that is still ingrained in business leaders today.

Colleagues, it is our duty as the GMB to encourage businesses to build a trans-inclusive workplace and we need the backing and support of employers to help understand the issues around transgender workers in the workplace. A business where everyone feels welcome and valued is by far a more productive one. Transforming a workplace gives the GMB a platform to protect our members and to ensure that we can have a clear learning pathway for our reps to be trained to deal with these non-inclusive employers. Our reps and workplace organisers need the tools so that we can ensure that workplaces are a supportive environment for trans people. Colleagues, we should be looking at how to develop a tool kit so that our reps can make the real difference to trans-colleagues' experiences at work, supporting them through transition and helping make sure that workplaces provide a safe and welcoming environment for everyone.

Congress, we need to get our reps educated and obtain the skills needed so that they can review current equal opportunities, bullying and harassment policies, to make sure that they promote trans equally, check other policies and procedures, such as recruitment policies, record-keeping and dress codes, to make sure that they do not discriminate against trans people and be able to encourage employers to include trans issues in induction training.

This Congress calls on the CEC to set up a working party to look at Trans discrimination in the workplace, and so achieve the aims we are looking for. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Anne. Seconder?

LORRAINE DELAZ AJETE PARKER (GMB Wales & South West): Congress, I second Motion 104. Trans people want and expect to be treated with dignity, fairness and equality. The GMB can have a major role in ensuring that all places provide a safe, welcoming and supportive environment. Trans people face massive discrimination in workplaces. 60% of trans workers have experienced some form of discrimination in their workplace, and 53% have felt the need to hide their trans status from their colleagues. It is not known how many trans people there are in the workplace. They choose not to disclose their trans status either before transition or if they start a new job and do transitioning.

Many trans people are not in the workplace because of the discrimination that they have experienced or feel that they will experience. Congress, we need to implement good, clear guidance to reps and create a working party with the skills and knowledge to develop good practices and help workplace organisers and reps to encourage their employers into adopting positive policies to support trans people within the workplace. This would make it a better place for all people who have issues with their gender identity. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Lorraine. Does anybody wish to speak in opposition? *(No response)* Before I call Cathy Murphy, I want to make an announcement — an apology — we are running late. That is because I was generous with the time on the CEC Special Report, which I thought was valid. So I am having to make a decision — this concerns the speakers and the seconders who I have called for Motions 191, 192, Composite 15 and Motion 195 — that we will take those after lunch. I am sorry to have called you down for no reason at all. But we are going to go on to Composite 13 and then it will be the General Secretary's Report. Hopefully, we will finish by 12.35. Cathy, can I ask you to respond on behalf of the CEC, please?

CATHY MURPHY (CEC, Commercial Services): Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC on Motions 101 and 104. On Motion 101 — Boycott the *Daily Mail* — the CEC is asking that that motion be supported but with a qualification. GMB deplores homophobic and transphobic attacks, comments and remarks, whether they occur in the media. Such attacks, comments and remarks are, shamefully, not limited to one form of media, and are too often seen across the media and wider public life.

We reaffirm our commitment, and as a priority for the National Equality Forum, to challenge homophobia and transphobia in the media, whether it appears in the *Daily Mail* or the *Morning Star*. This involves challenging bigotry and changing attitudes in our society. To do so we must be able to counter and challenge prejudices and secure coverage for LGBT+ campaigns as well as applying pressure on these publications to change their ways. This can best be campaigning pressure including sustained pressure rather than a boycott. These arguments can be challenged head-on rather than ignored.

The recent appointment of a new editor of the *Daily Mail* after 25 years reign of his predecessor in which bigotry was allowed to fester, gives an opportunity to apply new pressure and force them to change their editorial approach for good.

On Motion 104 — Survey of Workplace Trans Discrimination — the CEC is asking for this motion to be referred. The CEC welcomes this motion to tackle trans discrimination in the workplace, as with any group of members facing discrimination.

We believe that it is key that those members should be an active part of any discussion or working party, and are best to lead those conversations. We believe that this motion should be referred to the NEA to investigate the best way for the NEA to work with the LGBT+ network and the region. Congress, please accept the qualification on Motion 101 and accept to refer motion 104. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Cathy. Southern Region, do you accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. GMB Wales & South West, do you accept the reference back? (*Agreed*) Thank you. I will now put the following motions to the vote: Motion 97, Motion 99, Motion 102 and Motion 103 the CEC is supporting. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? They are all carried. The CEC support Motion 101 with qualification. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? That is carried. On Motion 104, for reference back, all those in favour, please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

Motion 97 was CARRIED.

Motion 99 was CARRIED.

Motion 101 was CARRIED.

Motion 102 was CARRIED.

Motion 103 was CARRIED.

Motion 104 was REFERRED.

THE PRESIDENT: As I said, apologies, because we are now moving on to Composite 13.

EMPLOYMENT POLICY: RIGHTS AT WORK COMPOSITE 13

(Covering Motions 189 & 190)

189 — Equal Pay (GMB Scotland)

190 — Glasgow Women's Strike (GMB Scotland)

Equal Pay & Glasgow Women's Strike

"This Congress notes and congratulates GMB Scotland and the Glasgow Women's Strike of October 2018, undertaken by predominately low-paid women workers employed by Glasgow City Council, including cooks, cleaners and carers. It has been a long fight to secure equal pay in Scottish local government with working women continuing to experience huge resistance in seeking equality as workers and as trades unionists.

Congress considers that these working women in Glasgow, and in other local authorities, were failed by their employers and by successive politicians and officials in local and central

government but also acknowledges that most of Glasgow's equal pay claimants are represented, not by their unions, but by third party lawyers.

"Congress believes that Glasgow, and Scotland's equal pay scandal, can be, at least partly, attributed to women being excluded from power and decision-making, and considers that it could not have continued for so long had more women, earlier, been in positions of power, influence and decision-making over the long-running dispute, and on all sides, including in management, political parties and in trade unions.

"Congress, in expressing its solidarity, acknowledges also the sexist response which the Glasgow women strikers garnered and that women workers, particularly carers, were told that the nature of their work should prevent them from taking industrial action and also by the dismissal of their action as variously – politically motivated; stoked up by union leaders; and that they did not know why they were on strike. Congress rejects these characterisations and repudiates firmly the attacks on the Glasgow women strikers, and their unions.

"Congress further notes that a final pay-out agreement was reached in January 2019, but that second and even third wave equal pay claims, and other forms of unequal treatment, continue to be fought across Scotland, including in other councils, and in the private sector."

Congress further notes the outline agreement to settle the outstanding claims reached between Glasgow City Council and the claimants' representatives in January 2019 and welcomes the role of the strike in securing this outcome and the action which has been led by GMB Scotland's members in Glasgow to turn weakness into collective strength to fight and win again.

"Congress acknowledges that GMB's own median gender pay gap is 32.4%, reflecting the fact men continue to hold more senior positions within the union than women."

Congress calls on GMB Union to support campaigns that fight for women's work to be valued and to end pay discrimination in every nation and region.

"Congress calls on the CEC to commit to the following:

- Putting resource in to learning the lessons of this historic equal pay campaign by committing to capturing the dispute, including the negotiations, legal limitations, and industrial organisation involved throughout, either via film, book or another suitable method, which can be disseminated to others in the union;
- Ensuring the GMB's organising strategy learns the lessons from Glasgow and explicitly builds around gender issues;
- Ensuring that reps across all of our sectors are specifically trained to deal with equal pay claims, from representing members via grievance in the workplace, to potential strike action; and
- Exploring a similar campaign to STUC President, Lynn Henderson's, "Step Aside Brother" campaign which highlights that brothers in the movement have to be conscious of the roles they fill and whether they can 'step aside' to support women."

(Carried)

ANNETTE DRYLIE (GMB Scotland): Congress, I move Composite 13 on Equal Pay and the Glasgow Women's Strike. The Glasgow women's strike of last October was one of the biggest revolts by women in history. Low-paid, part-time working women had had enough of the Scottish local authorities' decision makers and politicians resistance to achieving equality for them, something that single status was supposed to achieve but never did. Instead local authorities, particularly Glasgow, buried their heads in the sand hoping it would go away.

Furthermore, Congress, this is not the first time that I have spoken here on equal pay. It has been nearly 50 years since the Equal Pay Act came into force and we are still forced to take every conceivable action to attain equal pay. Fifty years! That's a lot longer than women took in trying to get the vote.

However, there are lessons to be learned. GMB Scotland has been very open and public about what we have learned from the experience in Glasgow and other local authorities. To quote GMB Scotland's Regional Secretary, Gary Smith: "A moment of reflection, not celebration for us and the whole labour Movement". We need to improve on the lessons learned, better information, better resources and better equipped going forward.

Congress, my branch has had 13 years of equal pay, 13 years since single status came in and 13 years of uncertainty, miscommunication, abusive members and a lack of resources to enable the branch to do what's needed to be done. But we got there through sheer determination and perseverance. It's been a hard struggle but we've got better, wiser and more resilient in what we have to do.

As you have heard, the fight for equal pay still goes on across Scotland, not just in local government but across the private sector as well. Congress calls on the CEC to commit to putting resources into learning the lessons from the Glasgow strike and capture the whole process from start to finish and share it across the Union as best practice; to ensure the GMB's organising strategy for lessons learned from the Glasgow strike and to explicitly build around gender issues; to ensure that all shop stewards from all sectors are specifically trained to deal with equal pay issues, from representing members in the workplace via grievances to potential strike action, and to explore a campaign similar to the "Step Aside Brother" campaign, run by former STUC President Lynn Henderson. Congress, please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Secunder?

MORAG REED (GMB Scotland): Congress, I second Composite 13 — Equal Pay and the Glasgow Women's Strike. Make no mistake, despite first-wave claim, despite over 12 years of fighting for second-wave claim, despite 8,000 women marching for justice and one of the biggest equal pay strikes for a generation, and despite Glasgow City Council being forced, eventually, to pay out over half-a-billion pounds in claim settlements, when women workers in Glasgow woke up this morning and made their way to work, they were still being discriminated against. Right now, as I am speaking to you, thousands of women workers in Glasgow still face pay discrimination. The unjust WPB is still in place and women workers will continue not to get equal pay until a new pay and grading scheme is implemented by Glasgow City Council, which will be, at the earliest, 2021.

Across Scotland there have been first wave claims, then there were second wave claims and now there are third wave claims. Congress, perhaps one of the most important lessons to be learned from the story of Glasgow is that equal pay is a process, not a destination. This is why we urgently need to review our own structures, develop our own capacity to meet this challenge and demand reforms of our legal institutions and of all levels of government to deliver and continue

delivering equality for all workers. Congress, I therefore urge you to support this motion. I second. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Morag. I am going to ask the question, but does anyone wish to speak against? *(No response)* No. I will now call the vote on Composite 13, which the CEC is supporting. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? Thank you. I think we should give the women of Glasgow a round of applause. *(Applause)*

Composite 13 was CARRIED.

ADDRESSES BY HAZEL NOLAN and RHEA WOLFSON

THE PRESIDENT: Just to follow on from that, in light of the passing of Composite 13, and due to the historic nature of the Glasgow equal pay dispute, I would like to invite GMB Scotland Officers Hazel Noland and Rhea Wolfson to address Congress. *(Applause)*

HAZEL NOLAN (GMB Scotland): Congress, it is an honour to address you. If ever there was a story of snatching victory from the jaws of defeat, then the Glasgow equal pay campaign is it. The consequences, if we had got this wrong, if we had failed to rectify the mistakes of the past, would have had a dire impact not only on the women workers in Glasgow, who formed part of the campaign, but also future generations of women workers, too.

Many of you sitting here today will not be aware of the fact that your lives have all been affected by the Glasgow equal campaign, too, whether you are working in British Gas in Preston or the NHS in Cornwall. This is because the consequences that our union would have faced if we had got this wrong would have had a devastating impact on the whole union. But we got it right! They say that success has many fathers and failure is an orphan. Well, in this case, Congress, success had many mothers — just about 8,000 of them — and failure had many fathers.

To put this into context, an Audit Scotland report in August 2017 clearly stated that women workers in local government fighting for equal pay had been failed by every level of government. They had been failed by Holyrood, they had been failed by COSLA and they had been failed by the council. When they had been failed by all three, Congress, they were failed by their union, too! Because it should never have taken a team of lawyers 13 years to resolve this, and it should never have been an issue in the first place.

I don't believe that Glasgow City Council hate women. They never sat down together in a room and agreed to underpay women because they are women. But what they did was when drawing up their budgets they looked to the path of least resistance and that path was our women members. That, Congress, is our historic failure, because our members should never be the path of least resistance. *(Applause)*

Perhaps the biggest success of our campaign is that women workers now know how to flex their industrial muscle. They now know their value and they now know their power, and the city will never be the same again. That is because the strike changed

everything. It allowed us, finally, to settle the women's claims for more than £550 million. Half-a-billion pounds! It's a staggering figure. It's a life-changing amount of compensation for our members. When you think of that figure, Congress, don't think of the monetary cost of it. I want you to think of the human cost of it. £550 million is more than 70 million hours. The reality of our members, for our members who work for a wage, is that they are ultimately selling the most precious thing that they have, which is their time. Many women workers had to go out and work 45 hours to put the same food on the table as men workers did with 35 hours! That is 10 hours of every week, of every month, of every year for over a decade! That's time they could have spent with their families and time they will never get back.

That brings into focus the many women who never saw justice and who died waiting for equality, including one of our GMB members who worked as a home carer, who died on the streets of Glasgow. She died whilst trying to make her one of her service users during the red weather warning and blizzards last year. Whilst she was trying to make it there, she was being paid a flat rate, while the largely male workers gritting the roads for the council were paid three times their hourly salary! If that makes you burn with a sense of injustice, Congress, like it did for myself, Rhea and everyone who is part of this amazing team, and it was a team that delivered equal pay in Glasgow, then perhaps you can begin to understand the swell of emotion that ultimately culminated in this historic strike, which my comrade and sister, Rhea Wolfson, will go on to address. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Hazel. Rhea.

RHEA WOLFSON (GMB Scotland): Thanks, Congress, and thank you for giving me the opportunity to talk about this fight. On 23rd and 24th October, more than 8,000 workers took strike action in Glasgow. On top of that, hundreds more stood in solidarity, refusing to cross picket lines, despite the council threatening to sack all of them. That's the headline and that's what we remember, but under that was a body of work. Remembering the process is as important as remembering the result. Just two years before, our reputation in the workforce was rock bottom and we were haemorrhaging members. In a ballot we could not turn out 5% of our membership in Scotland's largest local authority. Through a campaign of honesty, constant activity and engagement we slowly won back members' trust and started to rebuild our membership.

As the negotiations stalled on equal pay, and following months of calling for strike action from our members, we managed to deliver a strike ballot that smashed the legal thresholds with 98% in favour of action. (*Applause*) The Glasgow Women's Strike was always about more than equal pay. It was a culmination of a decade of anger after a female-dominated workforce had been let down and had their terms and conditions decimated. The strike defied the myths that we cannot collectivise women workers and that it is too hard to bring together skilled workers across a council and that these members would not strike for their rights. The council through the whole Tory anti-trade union rule book at us, but the women, united, will never be defeated! But we are not at the end of the fight yet. We have years of hard work left to ensure that a proper job-evaluation system is put in place that does not discriminate, and a paying and grading system that rewards our women workers not on the back of our men but a pay system that brings all workers up.

What we want to leave you with today is a message that there was no magic involved in the strike. It can and should be done over and over again across this country until we have justice for all working women. *(Applause)* GMB Scotland will be learning the lessons and taking the fight to all industries. We want to put the value of women's work at the heart of everything we do. We will take on the care industry and fight to redefine the value that society assigns to care work. We will fight for a decent actual living wage in local authorities, and we will never, ever again be found wanting when it comes to the fight for equal pay.

Congress, this is a fight that we have no option but to win. One member called our office just yesterday to tell us, in her words, "You saved my life". Pay justice is not an option. It is our mission, and as a union we have an obligation to be unrelenting in our fight. Like our fight in Glasgow, it is a fight that we will win. Solidarity! *(A standing ovation)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Rhea and Hazel. That applause is for all the women who went on strike. There is a fringe event as well. I, probably, should not plug one fringe event over the others but there is a fringe event.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

THE PRESIDENT: I can now move on to the General Secretary's Report. It gives me great pleasure to call on our General Secretary and Treasurer, Tim Roache, to move the General Secretary's Report and address Congress.
(General Secretary Report video shown) (Applause)

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Good afternoon, Congress, General Secretary and so very proud to be moving the General Secretary's Report, and where else to start by saying a huge thank you to every single one of you. You have just seen a fantastic video which is just a snippet of the work that goes on on behalf of our members day in and day out, and that is a testament and a tribute to every single one of you, so thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Thank you, too, to Barbara, who is doing a fantastic job in your first Congress, so warm, so inclusive, firm but fair, you are an absolute natural, mate, and a pleasure to work with. *(Applause)*

When I stood to be General Secretary, I said that I would be the activists General Secretary. That has taken me, again, this year 20,000 miles right across our five nations. At every turn I have met the activists' national president. So, Barbara, long may we continue to work together.

Of course, to Malcolm, who unfortunately is not able to be here this year because of Lynn's failing health. We send you our love and best wishes both to Malcolm and Lynn for all that you both do. Thank you, too, to June for stepping up at such notice, always willing, always able, always with such professionalism and always ready to stand for your Union. Thank's, June. You're doing a fantastic job. *(Applause)* Two women presiding over GMB Congress. How times are moving on, Congress. Brilliant stuff!

Brothers and sisters, when I took up this post if anyone had told me that four years on the newspaper headlines would include such gems as “Farage trapped on Brexit bus by milkshake-wielding protesters” or “The US President thinks that the Moon is part of Mars”, I’d have thought that you were having me on. Whilst I joke about these absurd headlines, as we heard from Alison Phillips yesterday, they are very damaging and it showed what a state the world is in. The US President — yes, he is US! — conducts his diplomacy via social media. Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, under his stage name of Tommy Robinson, peddling hate and division, while in the States we see Nazi flags at Pride events, we see the Brexit Party and we see Brexit itself. We see politics in the UK as utterly unpredictable, and business-as-usual politics gone forever. We see a world that is less predictable, less stable and more chaotic than I have seen since the miners’ strike in the ‘80s. Back then, it was social vandalism by a government that wanted to break the power of the working class. Now it is economic vandalism, together with a toxic mix of incompetence by a ruling elite intent on finishing the job. The heartbreaking consequences that you see writ large every day seem invisible to Philip Hammond, a nation as rich as ours condemned by the United Nations for how we treat the poorest in our society, yet the bloke who presides over the economic decisions simply denies that poverty exists in the UK! We are not a poor country, Congress. We are poorly run country.

As we celebrate our 130th birthday, we remember that in 1889 our great Union was formed campaigning for a guaranteed 8-hour working day. Today, 130 years on, many of our members in the gig economy, particularly our younger members, would give their right arm for a guaranteed 8-hour working day. That’s the size of the challenge that we have.

In 1979 trade union membership at its pomp, at its height, was 13 million. Now, the latest statistics halve that. The figure is six-and-a-half million! It is no coincidence at all that in that time inequality has spiralled. The richest 100 people in the UK have the combined wealth of the bottom 19 million, those 19 million who we represent every day! Congress, we can make all the excuses in the world, an all-out assault by the Tory Government on our right to organise, the failure of Labour governments to reverse those attacks, but in all honesty we need to look a lot closer to home, as we have just heard from Rhea and Hazel. Too often our Movement has been too slow to respond and too resistant to change. We lost the closed shop and didn’t adapt fast enough to the new world we had to organise in. We did things the way they had always been done, despite the industrial earth shifting from under our members’ feet. Nationalised services were flogged off and fragmented, yet our organising strategies did not change as quickly as the employment did for our workers. Schools went from LEA control to academies and free schools, yet we failed to respond quickly.

As communication changed, employers embraced it to boost their business models and increase workforce flexibility, using new communication channels to undermine union organisation and collective agreements. We carried on as usual. Colleagues, we must learn from these experiences of those decades when sweeping change diminished our power to use change in the modern era to enhance it. Automation, climate change, globalisation, Brexit. We face some huge challenges. But, Congress, we will not be a union that fears the modern world, but we will be a union that shapes it in the interests of our members and for those who will aspire to join GMB.

We can't do as we have always done, and hope it will turn out all right. A membership of 13 million to 6.5 membership tells you absolutely the opposite. So we have got a choice. We either shrug our shoulders and say that decline is inevitable and that as a manage team we will manage that decline, or we can do something different. We can grow, we can build and we can change.

In this modern era, GMB Union won't accept that a globalised economy means skilled jobs are sent abroad to countries whose governments bend the rules to support their manufacturing industry, while our Government bends over backwards to award them our work. It's a scandal, Congress! We have skilled and committed workers in Fife, in Scunthorpe, in Birkenhead, in Plymouth, in Bridgend, in Rosyth, in Appledore and in many more places who are ready, willing and able to build the industry of the future that this country needs. We won't accept outsourcing of public service contracts, which we warned time and again would never work. Yet we saw the collapse of Carillion, which went into liquidation with £29 million in the bank, yet owning £6.9 billion! Who paid for that decimation? Our members, not the directors who stuffed their pockets with millions of pounds of workers' money. *(Applause)*

We won't accept that local government workers will be underpaid, undervalued and overworked. They are the frontline public sector workers who care for our elderly, who feed and teach our kids, who keep our streets clean and our communities safe. We won't accept multinational companies continuing to see huge profits on the backs of working people who have no training, hire and fire, flex up, flex down, flex out the door, if you don't like, because there are hundreds of other people who will accept it. It can't go on.

Our NHS! Whose NHS? *(Call from the floor "Ours")* Whose NHS? *"Ours!"* Whose NHS? *"Ours!"* During the past three weeks I have seen, first hand, just how brilliant they are. My father, 97 years old, in the last three weeks of his life he was at Milton Keynes Hospital. The nurses, the doctors and the care workers cared for him as if he was their father. You will never privatise and fragment our jewel in the crown! *(Applause)*

Congress, together we are creating a trade union that plants a flag in the sand and says "Come and join us", because together we are making a difference; a union that knows and believes that power comes from and must reside with working people; a union that is built on the age-old understanding that working people are most powerful when they organise themselves for the collective good, with a collective voice and with collective action. Bosses may have power when workers are divided but when we stand together our voice is loud and our might is absolutely unstoppable. A quiet life never delivered an ounce of change, Conference, and now is not the time for silence. We will be the boldest and bravest in a collective movement of working people right across the UK, proclaiming loudly who we are, what we stand for and what we can achieve together, not an insurance policy but a movement, not in decline, a rallying cry for the working class. No instance in recent memory exemplifies that ethos more than the brilliant Glasgow women's strike.

I went and stood on the picket lines with our amazing women there and marched. As I stood at the top of the hill looking back at the procession, the scale of it was both awe-

inspiring and heartbreaking, because it had taken our union far too long to do right by those remarkable women who care for the most vulnerable in our society, who work too hard for too little and have been robbed of the pay they rightly earned. They were there with GMB flags in their thousands, standing up and being heard across the city and across the world in the biggest ever strike for equal pay. They won! We won hundreds of millions of pounds in the pockets of working women. I pay absolute tribute to Gary, to Rhea, to Hazel and to Sholah, to every single one of you. What a fantastic campaign! (*Applause*)

In years to come, Congress, I don't doubt that that strike in Glasgow will be seen as a defining moment, because it shows that we can't be afraid to take action. When we act in the interests of what is fair, right and good, when we do that by listening and empowering working people, they will join us, and together then we will win. Just like with Asda, we said we would no longer stand by and turn a blind eye and let our women members be discriminated against in their pay packets. Thousand of equal pay cases have been filed as we pursue justice for our members. We said we wouldn't support the Asda/Sainsbury's merger at all costs to keep the bosses happy. We didn't. We won! No merger. Rather than closures, we now have growing Asda membership. We said we wouldn't sit by and let Contract 6 be imposed on our members and, Congress, that battle continues. We've never had more members in Asda than in recent memory because we know when we grow, when we fight and when we build we will deliver real change.

We have taken on the gig economy. A fighting trade union doesn't sit back and allow this explosion of zero hour contracts, bogus self-employment and abusive agency bosses, all in the name of flexibility, but in reality flexible for whom, Congress. Flexible only for the employer. Our groundbreaking agreement with Hermes shows that our money is where our month is. That exemplary campaign brought together industrial activism, a solid legal campaign, hard-hitting communications, national headlines, supported by a political strategy that was rooted in members' lives. It brought the employer to our door because they just wanted it to stop. It delivered guaranteed wages, paid holidays and access to 17,500 workers who before that had nothing!

But, brilliant though these campaigns are, brilliant though these wins, that action must now become the rule and not the exception in GMB. No fight in the coming years will be bigger than that around energy and climate change. Climate change is a reality, Congress, and if we deny that we will cease to be relevant to the modern world. I have kids and I want the planet to be still here for them when they are grey and old and I want it to be here for their kids and their kids after that. It shouldn't be seen as radical, you know, to want an energy solution that reduces emissions, creates decent jobs, keeps the lights on, the economy moving and does not fleece the average bill payer. That's political, economic and moral common sense.

GMB is an energy union, and I want us to be a proud energy union for the next 130 years as well. But that means fighting for investment in nuclear and hydrogen to decarbonise our energy network whilst protecting jobs. We need a nationwide scheme to insulate homes and businesses, a commitment to the UK supply chain to create thousands of green-colour jobs, yet it's become typical of the sector that when we generate renewable energy on our shores, the wind turbines were manufactured in

Scandinavia, transported here on Dutch diesel-burning barges and connected into our grid with Chinese cables. That means the vast majority of cash spent on renewables in this country is knowingly and scandalously being awarded offshore. That's what we are going to be fighting in 2019, and fight we will on every front, in every workplace and in every sector. To do that we have to be the most effective fighting force we can be.

So I come back to where I started my speech. When I was elected four years ago, I realised that to change the world we had to change our union first. I will be really honest with you, Congress. That's not easy. A great union like ours, with 130 years of proud history and proud culture and ways of doing this means that is not easy. Last year, when I stood here I spoke about my pride in leading nine regions but one union. That started something. So many of you came up to me afterwards and said how right it was, that you are fiercely proud of your regions, and quite rightly, but that sometimes we behave as nine different unions and not one. That was hard to hear, because in this room we are all GMB. From Stockport to Stirling, from Leeds to Llandudno, Norfolk to Nottingham, Brighton to Birmingham, Belfast, Dublin and Durham, we are all proudly GMB. That's five nations, nine regions, one union! For the last 12 months I have been working with our brilliant senior management team to cement that at the very heart of how we operate. For the first time in our history, we asked every GMB employee what they understood about our union; who we are and where we are going. For the first time in our history, we brought every manager in the Union together to talk about how we can work smarter, develop our people better to serve you more.

For the first time in a senior management team, we brought together every employee in the Union to launch the One Union plan. One Union means being proud of our regions but being one organisation, with one set of aims pulling in the same direction, One Union rooted in the very best traditions of our union, that we achieve more through our collective endeavour than we will ever achieve alone. One Union making sure that every single penny you trust in us is spent on growing our Union, building our structures and delivering change that matters. It reasserts why we do what we do every single day. Everything we do, every action we take, every campaign and every conference must and will be about delivering real, lasting and practical change in the working world for the people who put their trust in us. That's you, our brilliant members! It was the American journalist, Sidney Harris, who so eloquently said: "Regret for the things we did can be tempered by time. It's regret for the things we did not do that's inconsolable" or, as my old mate Bob Crow put it, "If you fight, you might not always win, but if you don't fight, you'll never bloody win"! (*Applause*)

I can already howl from the right-wing press, such as "Upstanding organisations like the Taxpayers' Alliance". Come on! The Taxpayers' Alliance! Boooo! It's more like the Tax Dodgers' Alliance. I was sitting *there* yesterday — this is absolutely true — and I saw that they have launched their new campaign. Colleagues, I'm not kidding. It's a campaign to shoot down red union barons and take a stand against socialism, because while trade unions are apparently dinosaurs from a lost age, we simultaneously have too much power. You couldn't make it up. This is from the unelected, undemocratic, free-trade, free-for-all-loving, hard right, Tory libertarian group, a group which, rather than represent taxpayers, the reality is that they represent tax exiles and taxpayers from other countries than the people of this nation.

Congress, we're the real Taxpayers' Alliance, 620,000 people, 620,000 strong who care for our members and pay for and work for our public services. We're the Taxpayers' Alliance! (*Applause*) Just as we have this week, I'm looking forward to the Taxpayers' Alliance holding their conference to democratically decide their policies. Well, there's a phone box just on the corner. I'm sure that'll be available for them. I say to them and I say to the Tories as well, and whoever takes over once they have stopped fighting over the bag of coke, bring it on. (*Laughter*) Bring on the battle. Bring on the battle! It'll be the same battle for us. It doesn't matter if it's Boris or Charlie whatever-his-name is. Charlie someone. (*Laughter*) If they want to see a 21st century fighting movement as relevant to the working people as it has ever been, then watch GMB at Work. We're not going anywhere, colleagues. Look at Hermes, look at Asos, Net-a-Porter, look at Swissport, look at Wilcos, look at British Gas and look at the stand we're taking at ISS. Look at when we won the strike at Sodexo, and we won't stop there. Amazon, until you stop abusing your workers, and they leave work in an ambulance, we're coming after you. (*Applause*) Look at DX. If you think you're stringing us along by having meaningless conversations, you're wrong! Until you give our employees, our workers, the fairness they want and deserve, we ain't going anywhere. Look at Asda. Imposing Contract 6 isn't right. The workers are angry and we're taking you on. Barking & Dagenham Council, Care UK, DPD we are coming, a fighting and campaigning movement, growing our Union, building our power and changing the world of work together. Thank you. I move. (*A standing ovation*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tim. Does anyone have any questions on the report? (*No response*) No. I will now put the General Secretary's report to Congress. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against. Thank you. That concludes Congress. I apologise again for its overrun. Enjoy the fringe events, meetings and workshops. Don't forget to also visit the exhibitors out behind the Congress Hall. I've had a special request from Stress Network. They are in the corner. If you can just make sure you visit all the periphery exhibitors as well. Please be back in the Hall promptly for 2 p.m.

(Congress adjourned for lunch)

GMB 2019 DAY 3 2.00pm

AFTERNOON SESSION

(Congress reassembled at 2.00 p.m.)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, can I call Congress to order, please. Once again, can I remind you to switch your devices off or make sure they are on silent. I hope you all had a good lunch and enjoyed the fringes or the exhibitors. Could I please also remind Congress that any leaflets or other materials that are circulated in the hall must be approved by the Standing Orders Committee first.

EMPLOYMENT POLICY: RIGHTS AT WORK

THE PRESIDENT: Because we ran over time this morning, we will start with the motions on Employment Policy: Rights at Work debate that we did not have time for.

Can movers and seconders for Motion 191, 192, C14, and Motion 195, please make their way to the front and in light of the fact that we are running slightly behind can I please ask delegates to keep to their time because I am going to have to get harsher and I do not like doing that, so bear with me and just look at the red light, please. Thank you. Is there a mover for Motion 191?

CANCER PATIENTS MOTION 191

191. CANCER PATIENTS

This Congress should be aware that we have NHS members diagnosed with cancer experiencing a difficult time from their employer. Cancer falls under the protected characteristics for disability.

Cancer patients who are employed are experiencing pressure at work and home to juggle between both. They experience a living fear of losing their jobs.

Cancer patients are more likely to take considerable amounts of sick leave due to chemotherapy and alternative treatments. The employer will use the sickness policy to start procedure against the employee for them to be ousted out through the staged process.

We would like to see all workers with cancer more supported by their employers, to be paid a full salary whilst on sick leave and for the sickness policy not to be used against them to oust them out of employment.

We want to campaign to bring an awareness of cancer employees in the workplace and the importance of support and protection towards our members.

EAST AND ESSEX NHS BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

NICOLA WARR (London): President, Congress, imagine working for an employer for over 10 years, you have an exemplary employment record and an excellent work ethic, and you decide you want to further your career and apply and succeed in getting a high position in a different department within the same company. You are looking forward to your new venture. You take two weeks annual leave so you are refreshed for your new role and whilst on holiday you receive the devastating news that you have grade 3 breast cancer; not only do you have to break it to your family but you also have to break it to your new manager. You expect compassion and understanding and at the very least support, and for the first few weeks you receive this from all parties. Then after undergoing a mastectomy and chemotherapy, you suffer severe side effects that result in you being signed off work for a further six weeks. You feel bad for your employer because you have not been able to start your role but you are still facing a course of radiation. Then you receive a letter inviting you to a capability meeting after a review with occupational health. It does not seem possible, does it, but this is an example of the appalling treatment that one of our members received from her employer. Just six weeks into her treatment they started the capability process and three months after diagnosis she found herself in a capability meeting; six months after diagnosis she was dismissed; not only was she facing the possibility of dying but she was plunged into financial hardship. Her marriage fell apart, as did she. With the support of the GMB the dismissal was

appealed and an alternative role was offered. The employer acknowledged that the cancer support information provided to them would be incorporated into their policy and used going forward.

Is this a success? I do not think so. Whilst highlighting the injustice of what happened had an effect, the fact that employers can and do take this stance against employees is totally unacceptable. All employees should be afforded the right to recover and fight cancer without any reprisals. Congress, I call upon you to vote in favour of this motion. We need to – no, we must – campaign to raise awareness of the struggle cancer employees face and we must insist on a full salary whilst on sick leave and put an end to this outrageous and disgusting behaviour by employers. Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Nicola. A seconder?

GAVIN DOWNEY (London): This motion came from our NHS branch and speaks about NHS staff needing time off when they develop cancer. Our NHS should be a model employer but we also need to ensure there is adequate support for all workers with cancer. Some may be able to continue to work, others may not. Companies need to look at sick leave policies allowing workers time off for appointments, reasonable adjustments, maybe changing work or job descriptions to accommodate for the illness, flexible working to help with appointments and after-effects of treatment, and also may need to consider support and training for colleagues and co-workers. We need more awareness at work and GMB's Health and Safety reps are the best placed to assist. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gavin. Motion 192.

AMEND EQUALITY ACT TO INCLUDE MEDICAL SUSPENSION ON FULL PAY MOTION 192

192. AMEND EQUALITY ACT TO INCLUDE MEDICAL SUSPENSION ON FULL PAY

This Congress recognises some employers refuse to return workers that could be given undertakings or light duties implied by their medical practitioners' back to work fit note.

The Equality Act 2010 protects workers and encourages employers to adhere to the Equality Act by assisting in return back to work applications from injuries or illnesses that would require a phased return to work.

However, some employees are encouraged by the employer to return to their doctor to get signed off with a sick certificate due to them not supporting the member with light duties or reasonable adjustments forcing the employee to take additional unwanted sick leave invariably without a salary or statutory sick pay.

Congress we need to amend the Equality Act 2010 to include statutory wording whereby given that if employers can't meet the stipulations in supporting a return to work with reasonable adjustments then the wording to be included are "if no reasonable adjustments can be implemented to support a return to work for the employee, then the employer should medically suspend on full pay until they can meet the requirements of supporting a return back to work".

CAMDEN APEX BRANCH
London Region

(Referred)

FRANK OSEI (London): Congress, an employer can only medically suspend an employee from work on the grounds of health and safety legislation. This can be either maternity related, for example, work in a laboratory where radiation is being used, or an employee having a serious allergic reaction to a hazardous substance. We acknowledge and applaud the health and safety legislation in that the elements are correctly implied to support medical suspension. However, medical suspensions are few and far between within the common workplace.

We all agree that in most workplaces ill health is the common denominator for the general practitioner's sick certificates and fit notes, which do not necessitate the requirements for medical suspension outside the health and safety requirements. This motion seeks the necessary amendment to the Equality Act to include the wording "medical suspension on full pay" moving towards a more diverse role in line with the working environments of today. The reasons for this is that some employers are abusing the Equality Act by refusing to accept the back to work fit note for the worker to return to work with light duties or through a phased return to work. Some employers simply say, "Sorry, we don't have any light duties," and maintain that the employee cannot come back to work, thereby referring them back to their doctor to seek a further sick certificate. This relieves the employer of any undertaking to support a return to work by removing the phased return to work or a return with light duties.

Congress, the Equality Act 2010 is supposed to protect workers and encourage employers to adhere to assisting employees in returning to work following injury or illness. However, the reality is that employers are being encouraged by their employers to return to their doctors to be re-signed off with a sick certificate. This is a clear abuse of the Equality Act and the employee would have been authorised to return to work by their doctor. Failing to support employees with light duties or reasonable adjustments and forcing them to take additional unwanted sick leave invariably without a salary or statutory sick pay leaves the employee in limbo without recourse.

Congress, this is not good enough. The Equality Act is open to abuse by unscrupulous employers and it requires legislation to bring the abuse to an end. New legislation should include that if no reasonable adjustments can be implemented to support a return to work for an employee, then the employer should medically suspend the employee on full pay until they can meet the requirements of supporting a return to work. Alternatively, an amendment to the Equality Act should include the words "medical suspension with full pay". This will encourage employers to take positive steps to adhere to the undertakings of assisting with a phased return to work or light duties. Congress, please support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Frank. A seconder?

ANDREW CLARKE (London): First-time delegate. *(Applause)* President, Congress, at times we all become ill in one way or another, some members more so than others. We rely on our doctors to ensure that we are eligible to return to work

after long spells off, sometimes with a note for phased return or light duties. The doctor has complied in signing you off the sickness register. Unfortunately, some employers will refuse to recognise the certificate of a phased return or light duties, for example, no heavy lifting. The employer sometimes sends you back home with no pay hence locking you out of the workplace via an unrecognised suspension, without salary or statutory sick pay, or to the fact the employer is sending you back to question the doctor's professional reasons by not allowing you to work with the fit note. This rationale is being used more and more in the workplace. Employers ignoring the employee's doctor's fit note on phased return or light duties is clearly locking you out of the workplace given they are refusing to acknowledge the doctor's recommendations. Congress, isn't there something wrong with that?

The Equality Act 2010 provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals with equality for all. We are asking for strengthening and amending the Equality Act to include a medical suspension on full pay. This ensures an alternative other than being locked out of the workplace due to a doctor's fit note. Congress, please support this motion. I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Andrew, in time. Well done, thank you. The mover for Composite 14, with Wales and South West to move and Northern to second?

A TIME TO GRIEVE: THE PARENTAL (LEAVE AND PAY) ACT COMPOSITE MOTION 14

(Covering Motions 194 and 196)

194 – The Parental (Leave and Pay) Act – Wales & South West Region

196 – A Time to Grieve: Removing the Stigma Surrounding Miscarriage and Infant Loss – Northern Region

This Congress – acknowledges that the Parental (Leave and Pay) Act, scheduled to be introduced by the Government in 2020, that will give some employed parents statutory right to two weeks bereavement pay leave, is to be welcomed in principle.

This Congress is concerned by the fact that 1 in 4 pregnancies end in loss. Currently there is no legislation to ensure that both parents are able to have leave from work to mourn their child.

Unfortunately, many bereaved parents will be excluded from benefiting from the Act due to the restrictions contained in the detail, ie the age range of the deceased being defined as “under the age 18, or by still birth from 24 weeks of pregnancy” and not solely on the fact that the parent is bereaved. Also, qualification for payment for the leave and the reclaiming of the cost by their employer, only applies when the parents has a length of service over of twenty six weeks with their employer.

This means that bereaved parents of a deceased 19 year old or above falls outside of the Act for the right to statutory paid bereavement leave, this cannot be morally right, all bereaved parents should be treated equally under the Act.

The grief that a parent feels is not regulated by the age of the circumstances of the deceased, or by their length of employment, but by the actual tragic loss that they are experiencing. The parents coming to terms with their loss and having to deal with the formal administrative procedures that have to be undertaken at this very sad and stressful time has no bearing related to the age of the deceased.

Congress calls for a change in the law to allow the mother one month's and the father a minimum of two weeks paid leave rather than applying for compassionate leave or having to go down as sick, which adds significant financial implications to an already difficult time.

Congress calls on the GMB to lobby the Government to ensure that the current lack of provision for grieving families is revised to better support all workers' rights to a time to grieve free from stigmatisation.

This Congress calls for the GMB to lead a campaign and lobby Government to amend the Act, removing restrictions, so that all bereaved parents are treated equally and with compassion, as no parent should have to cope with the death of their own son or daughter.

(Carried)

ROGER HUNT (GMB Wales & South West): Congress, at the 2014 Congress held in Nottingham I stood at the rostrum as a bereaved parent asking the GMB to join other organising organisations to lobby Government for future bereaved parents to have the right to statutory pay bereavement leave. Bereavement should not be treated as an illness nor is it the time to take annual leave. Congress, good news, after many years of lobbying a ground-breaking breakthrough has been made using the GMB's campaigning alongside these other organisations. The Government is scheduled to introduce the Parental (Leave and Pay) Act 2020, which will give some bereaved parents and primary carers the statutory right to leave and pay for the first time. My thanks go to all the lobbying organisations, especially the GMB, for their involvement and commitment in making this a successful campaign. Thank you, GMB. *(Applause)*

Congress, the Act is well intentioned and in principle is welcomed but although it is a statutory right I wish that no one has to access it. No parent should have to cope with the death of their child. The sad news: unfortunately, the Act as written is restrictive and could possibly exclude up to 75% of bereaved parents. Only parents whose son or daughter dies under the age of 18, or suffer a stillbirth from 26 weeks of pregnancy, will qualify for the two weeks statutory leave. Furthermore, to qualify for the leave to be paid they must have been employed in continuous employment for 26 weeks with their employer, who will then be able to reclaim some or all of the costs. These restrictions are morally wrong.

A parent becomes a bereaved parent at the time their son or daughter dies and access to statutory rights to paid leave should be equally applied to all bereaved parents from the day of the death of their child recognising individual circumstances. The grief and emotional stress experienced is not regulated or influenced by the age of their deceased son or daughter but by the tragic loss of their child. No bereaved parent should be excluded from their statutory right to paid leave.

Congress, the key objective in 2014 was to cure the statutory right to leave and pay for bereaved parents. The legislation now needs to be revisited to remove the restriction that excludes some parents. Future access needs to be tailored in a flexible way to accommodate individual circumstances. Two weeks paid parental leave is not long enough. I thank the CEC for their supportive stance on this motion. This Congress calls for the GMB to lobby Government to amend the Act and remove the restrictions. No employed bereaved parent or primary carer should be excluded access to this statutory right to paid bereavement leave. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well said, Roger. Thank you.

SUSAN BIRNIE (Northern): Congress, some organisations are providing help and support to grieving parents in their time of need. We know the charities like SANDS, BLISS, The Lullaby Trust, the Miscarriage Association, Tommy's, and many more are all there to help. However, many employers are not prepared to help a mother or father with compassionate leave or time off at a time that is already difficult enough for them. We know that the law as it stands does not really help a woman if a miscarriage takes place before the 24th week of pregnancy.

Congress, what many women need is support. The fathers also need time to grieve. That is why we are asking for a mother to have one month's paid leave and a father two weeks' paid leave when there is a miscarriage. In 21st century Britain our members should not have to "get on with it" and it does seem that there is little form of support in the workplace. Congress, Baby Loss Awareness Week takes place in October of this year. All we ask is that in doing further work on this very sensitive area lawmakers are compassionate and show that they are listening. We ask for the union to lobby for better rights at work in this area so that our members are free to grieve and not feel that they are being treated differently. People may have been made to feel that they had a stigma in days gone by but that should not be the way of the workplace in Britain today. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Susan. The mover of Motion 195.

EXTENDED PATERNITY LEAVE FOR FATHERS MOTION 195

195. EXTENDED PATERNITY LEAVE FOR FATHERS

This Congress feels it is time that the statutory paternity leave for fathers is extended from two weeks to at least a minimum six week entitlement of paid paternity leave. On the surface, this looks like a motion with obvious advantages specifically for men to enable more time to spend with mother and child and to get a better bond with their new-born baby, but this actually favours mothers as well in the following ways.

It is not uncommon now for mothers to have caesarean sections and these sections have long recovery times. You cannot usually drive for six weeks minimum based on medical advice as well as for car insurance purposes. Everyday bending, lifting and just being a mom is increasingly difficult following a caesarean section, as well as very difficult without having a caesarean section. By allowing fathers to have longer paternity leave, this can take these obstacles away from moms. They won't be forced to start driving earlier, which is the reality of what happens, so the safety of mother and child is improved and they don't risk driving without voiding their insurance. They will have more help in day to day life while recovering from childbirth, or major abdominal surgery in the case of a caesarean section. Having this support can make them less likely to feel trapped on their own and can be a proactive measure against mental health issues such as post-natal depression. As a result, moms could physically and mentally recover from giving birth far quicker than if they are doing it on their own while the father goes to work, so they may also be able to return to work at an earlier date should they wish to do so.

This extended paternity leave would also help to break down the idea of gender specific roles and changes like this are needed to transform the idea of equality in the household. Same-sex parents would also benefit from this.

Please support this motion.

(Carried)

PAUL OSTERLOH (Birmingham & West Midlands): First-time Congress, first-time speaker. *(Applause)* Thank you. Congress, I call on you to support this motion to lobby Government to extend paid paternity leave. Extended paternity leave will benefit new parents and the babies in many ways. Having both parents off work for longer to support the family could aid the mother's recovery and further support bonding. Recovery from childbirth or adapting to a new child in the household is definitely not easy. For example, take a Mum who has had a caesarean, normally she would not drive for at least six weeks. Being at home for longer than the current statutory two weeks can help and ensure a new mother is not isolated in the house, which can often trigger worse than postnatal depression. Some mothers end up driving early against medical advice simply because they have to. Having a quicker recovery due to support at home means that mothers can be ready to return to the workplace sooner, should they wish, therefore giving them more independence and means that the parent returning to work will not have to worry so much.

This motion is far bigger than men just getting more time off work. It is a big step towards breaking down the architecture and the patriarchal idea of gender specific roles within the household. If we are to achieve true gender equality then we absolutely need to break down these barriers and get away from stereotypical image of the mother being the care-giver and the man being the breadwinner. This motion directly affects the GMB equality stance as well. The average age of the first-time parent varies between 18 and 50 around the world so many parents would be under 31 and come under GMB's Young Members strand. Same sex parents would also benefit from this, as would the disabled members. Congress, please support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. Well done. Secunder? Is there a secunder? Formally? Thank you. Does anybody else wish to come in to speak against these motions? No? Could I ask Anne Dean, from GMB Scotland, to respond for the CEC.

ANNE DEAN (CEC, Public Services): President, Congress, speaking on behalf of the CEC on Motion 192, Amend Equality Act to Include Medical Suspension on Full Pay, which we are asking to be referred. The motion does raise an important issue which would benefit from some research and wider consultation with specialists in the area and the recommendation as to refer. Sometimes a GP will issue a conditional fit note for a worker returning to work after absence but it is a statement that the worker is fit for work subject to certain limitations or adjustments being put in place. If it is not possible for the employer to accommodate these adjustments or if there is no agreement on changes then the worker must be treated as being not fit for work. GPs often recommend a phased return to work where hours are built up gradually over a period of time. For a disabled worker this may be a reasonable adjustment as long as it has the effect it is the disability that is preventing them from fully returning to work. If a worker does return on a phased return then the employer is only obliged to pay them for the hours actually worked. For a disabled worker it is not a reasonable adjustment for the employer to pay full pay during a period of reduced hours. The

motion seeks to address this by placing the worker on medical suspension, similar to the provision that exists under health and safety law in respect of hazardous substances, but pay is time limited.

The CEC notes that unions have generally been campaigning on the disability aspects of the equalities legislation and to move away from a restrictive medical model towards a wider social model which treats workers more in line with the reality of the situation. Therefore, the reference to medical suspension suggests that the medical model should apply and this may inadvertently encourage employers to sidestep the adjustments that we would want to see them making. For these reasons we are asking for this motion to be referred. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Anne. Does London Region accept the reference back? Yes. Thank you. I am gradually learning what I can and can't do because the CEC is supporting all the other three motions and London have agreed, I can take all four motions in one block. So, Motion 191, 192, C14, and Motion 195, all those in favour please show. All those against? They are all carried.

Motion 191 was CARRIED.

Motion 192 was REFERRED.

Motion C14 was CARRIED.

Motion 195 was CARRIED.

PRESENTATION OF ELEANOR MARX AWARD

THE PRESIDENT: We now get back to our scheduled business this afternoon and we now move to the presentation of the Eleanor Marx Award. This is the fourth year of our award to recognise outstanding GMB Women activists in memory of Eleanor Marx, one of our founders. Eleanor worked alongside Will Thorne setting up our union and was elected to our executive at the 1891 Congress. I am so pleased to announce that the winner is Shona Thomson from GMB Scotland. (*Applause*) Can I just say something about Shona. She is awarded this for her outstanding contribution to the fight for justice in last year's historic Glasgow Equal Pay dispute, which led to the largest strike by women and men for equal pay in Britain, making headlines around the world. Well done, Shona. If you would like to come up and collect your award?

Presentation amidst applause.

SHONA THOMSON (GMB Scotland): Thanks. I am a bit speechless for once. I am really honoured to receive this prestigious award but may I also receive it on behalf of my sisters that are out there in Glasgow. (*Applause*) We all put up a fantastic fight. We did. We made history. It was just amazing. Can I just say thanks on my personal journey in this really big fight – which is not finished yet, we still have to go forward – to Ray, Hazel, John, all my background helpers, and everything. Do you know most importantly what has come out of this is the solidarity of this union. From all across, nationwide, donations were received for our hardship fund, and everything like that. It is absolutely amazing. Thank you all very, very much. (*Applause*) All these things fundamentally just added strength and strength and gave our women more courage and strength to go on for what they believed in. I have been described by the union as

a guiding light in this campaign. I was telling this to my grandson and he, funnily enough, said to me, "I think, Nana, more like the fog horn over the Clyde," because my voice would not shut up! So, thanks again to all my sisters in Glasgow and I accept this on behalf of them as well. Thank you. (*Standing ovation*)

THE PRESIDENT: So well deserved. That equal pay win was ground-breaking and we have now settled 14,000 claims. It just goes to show that when we build the union, when we stand up for what we believe in, we can overcome enormous hurdles, and I hope the actions of Shona and the Glasgow Women will serve as an inspiration for us all. You can clap for Shona again if you want to! (*Applause*)

INDUSTRIAL POLICY: COMMERCIAL SERVICES

THE PRESIDENT: We will now be moving on to the motions programmed for this afternoon. Can I call the movers and seconders for the Industrial Policy: Commercial Services Debate, please make themselves ready at the front, that is, Motions 208, 210, 213, 216, 217, 218, and 219. Could the mover of Motion 208 come to the rostrum, please?

A JUST TRANSITION MOTION 208

208. A JUST TRANSITION

This Congress congratulates GMB and sister unions, Prospect, Unison and Unite, on publication of the pamphlet 'Demanding a just transition for energy workers' in December 2018.

"Congress believes that the views of workers affected, as expressed through GMB and other energy unions, should be central to the development of policies on energy, industrial strategy and climate change. Congress also recognises that energy and climate change policy impacts upon all workers, both in the UK and around the world.

"Congress notes the lack of a 'just transition' in previous decades has left too many workers and communities on the scrapheap. Promises of green jobs have failed to materialise because Government has failed to put in place policies to promote domestic low-carbon manufacturing in the UK and secure a domestic industrial supply chain for the onshore wind industry. The existing approach of relying on the market is clearly failing to deliver.

"Congress welcomes the ten-point plan contained in 'Demanding a just transition for energy workers'. In particular, it supports calls for new jobs to be equivalent in skills, conditions and pensions and for a full review of the ownership status of energy assets in the UK.

"While acknowledging the need to address climate change, Congress also appreciates the proud history of the GMB within the Gas Workers and General Union and the continued importance of gas today for manufacturing and for heating our homes.

"Congress calls on the CEC to work with other Unions to:

- Promote the just transition 10 point check list in order to decarbonise our energy system while ensuring fair treatment of workers and communities most affected; and
- address the fundamental problems of ownership and control within our energy system, promoting greater public ownership at the heart of the transition."

GLASGOW GENERAL APEX BRANCH
GMB Scotland

(Carried)

JOHN CHANNON (GMB Scotland): First-time delegate, first-time speaker. *(Applause)* Congress, climate change will also have a profound change for our economy, employment, and as a trade union born in the struggle of the gas workers our members are at the front centre of this debate. That is why this transition period will not count in the economy unless the workers in our energy industries are at the very heart of a policy development process as we face the challenges of the future today. However, Congress, we all need honesty in this debate and acceptance of real world realities. This is where the collective incredible voice of the GMB is so important. We have seen in the USA, France, and most recently Australia, what happens when the left ignores energy workers and working class communities instead of talking with them and the right fills the gap. That is what political failure looks like and it opens the door to the likes of Donald Trump.

Let me tell you what failure looks like in Scotland. Over a decade ago we were promised that Scotland would be the Saudi Arabia of renewables. Today our renewables manufacturing yards in Fife lie empty because the offshore wind sector is controlled not by us but by Far East finance, Middle Eastern wealthy states that subsidise European energy funds. Congress, this cannot continue to go unchallenged. That is why former BiFab workers and their communities have launched the Fife “Ready for Renewal” Campaign. It is calling on EDF to build the fabricated lined jackets for the new NnG offshore wind farm projects in Methil and Burntisland yards. NnG has a value of £2bn. It will support over 6,000 direct jobs and will power over 350,000 homes. It will be located just 10 miles from the coast of Fife. EDF wants to build those steel jackets in Indonesia for buttons and ship them 7,000 miles around the world. If EDF renewables has any credibility on its place in communities and environment then it will agree with our members and our communities, and this Congress, I am sure, that those jackets should be built in Fife. Congress, if we do not campaign and fight for proper planning, investment, and legislation that generally supports our energy sector, its transition and our national interests then will continue to be left fighting for scraps. There will be no Scunthorpes and no Fifes.

I am standing on this rostrum in front of every one of you brothers and sisters as a proud coalminer at one time and I have actually seen the devastation that the Tories caused to our communities and round about the villages, and it is heartbreaking. We are now demanding a just transition for energy workers that demonstrates a better way to bring credibility to this debate with an energy and environment policy that is rooted in the real world, while defending the interests of our energy sector members and their communities. I ask you to support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

JUNE MINNERY: Thank you, John. Do we have a seconder? Formally. Thanks, Annette. Could I ask the mover of Motion 210, please, to come to the rostrum?

SKILLS SHORTAGE WITHIN WATER SECTOR MOTION 210

210. SKILLS SHORTAGE WITHIN WATER SECTOR

This Congress believes the level of fully trained workers within the water industry is reaching critical levels.

GMB should promote a review into:-

- training and the impact to health and safety, on not having any controls within the industry.
- The total lack of investment by water companies to address this important issue.

THREE VALLEYS WATER BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

TONY COLE (London): I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)* They told me I would not be able to see you but I can! I work in the water industry and have personal experience of the concerns raised by this motion. When I joined a water company in 1997, some 20 years ago, I was promised training and a certificate of mains and service laying competency but this was never delivered. Despite repeated requests for over two years myself and a colleague who joined at the same time were told the amount of hands-on experience we had gained was adequate training and he could not justify the expense. This left us both feeling very let down and undervalued and are worried that this is becoming entrenched practice across other water companies.

Of the 12 staff working on the network where I am based only two have had certified mains and service laying training. We are trained to perform all other aspects of our job but this vital part seems to have been forgotten. Water companies are no longer investing in their workforce to maintain workers' skills in laying the mains and service pipes. These are both highly important aspects of our job which, if not done correctly, could lead to major health and safety risks if you bear in mind that we are relied upon to deliver clean drinking water to homes all across the UK. Largely new employees are being taught in-house by existing employees. Unfortunately, this means that bad habits are being imparted alongside good ones which lead to the loss of skills and dilution of best practice.

In addition, I spoke to a colleague in a different area where they only employ contract labour to carry out mains and service work. This person shared with me that he carries out audits and is concerned that although these contractors have accredited hygiene and street works cards, and other required cards, it is not the same when it comes to mains and service laying. There are still many training companies out there, some of which offer CABWI certificates – Certificate and Assessment Board for the Water Industry. It is my understanding that companies receive certain tax relief when it comes to training staff. I therefore see no good reason why the industry would not want to invest in their workforce resulting in customers enjoying a high quality service carried out in a safe and robust manner.

Our motion is calling for the GMB to review the training in this vital sector. It is for these reasons that I urge this Congress, please, to support this vital motion. I move. *(Applause)*

JUNE MINNERY: Thank you. Do you have a seconder for the motion?

CLIFF RONEY (London): President, Chair, Congress, brothers and sisters. I have worked in the water industry for almost 40 years and in that time, especially since privatisation, I have witnessed the gradual erosion of training and investment in staff. If this is allowed to continue, it is not a case of if but when there will be a major incident. Yesterday I seconded the motion for health and safety which sadly led to the loss of life, which demonstrates the importance of training for all of our members.

The water companies cannot be allowed to continue to cut training to bankroll share dividends. Some of the pumping station equipment dates back to the 1950s and it is only because of the staff who have built up their own resourceful way of keeping it running that we have avoided major loss of supply in many areas, therefore training has not been kept up to date and staff have to improvise rather than be supported and trained correctly. It is imperative that the high standards of quality are maintained at all costs, this includes training and can only happen with the renationalisation of the water industry and can only be achieved with a new Labour government.

Now we go for the bit that is not fully scripted. The water industry fat cats continue to pay obscene amounts of money and bonuses even when they have failed and in many cases have been sacked. Brothers and sisters, the last time I represented a member who was told he was sacked, he was told to clear his locker, leave his van in the car park, and leave the site immediately. He was not given hundreds of thousands of pounds or million of pounds.

On this platform one year ago a campaign was started to *Take back the Tap*. Please get behind the campaign and back our members who keep the taps running. Thank you. I second. (*Applause*)

JUNE MINNERY: Thank you. I call the mover of Motion 213.

RETAIL JOBS MOTION 213

213. RETAIL JOBS

This Congress is concerned by the great loss of retail jobs and its effect on our members, also members of other trade unions. Congress believes that this is in great part due to the antiquated rating system applied to retail units. Congress believes that a sales tax for all retail outlets to be fairer and must be applied to all retail outlets including online sales. Congress therefore instructs the CEC to investigate this matter over the coming twelve months and return to the 2020 Congress with a report, or a CEC motion that members can then consider what action to take next. Congress also instructs the CEC to work in harmony with other trade unions and the Labour Party campaign on this issue to support our members employed in retail on our high streets.

W50 WELLINGTON BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Referred)

BYRON COOKE (Birmingham & West Midlands): This motion was a little bit complicated and I will be honest with you I have not worked in retail. I do not think I could. I take my hat off to people who work in retail, I really do. I do not know how you deal with customers. Primarily what this motion is asking for is a sales tax to

level the playing field between high street shops and online retailers. Business rates for businesses that pay them roughly account to about the same as your rent. If you have a small business, say your rent is £20,000 a year, you know that you are going to have to pay about £20,000 business rates, as an average, that is, so that is a very general average. You know that you as a small business have to pay £40,000 before you even open the door, before you even put stock on the shelves, and even think about employing someone. That is an expense of a small business whereas someone like an online retailer, for example, will not have to pay business rates because they do not have a shop. They can sell things at potentially £20,000 less. What this motion is asking for is to scrap business rates and put a sales tax on that is fair for everyone. So, if you have a shop you are not paying business rates but you are paying rates on products that you sell. If you are an online retailer, you are also paying rates on products that you sell so that the theory behind this is that everything should level itself out.

I will read the rest of my script. Sorry, that was off piste. If business rates were scrapped and tax was placed on the sales of goods, this would benefit smaller high street shops with lower turnover of goods making them more competitive against online retailers. It may slightly increase the cost of internet goods which in return would encourage people to visit the high street more. If you are paying a little bit more for your internet goods, why don't you just go down the high street, pick up your lunch, and a new book. Congress, I move this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

JUNE MINNERY: Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

CHRISTINA DEARLOVE (Birmingham & West Midlands): First-time delegate to Congress and first-time speaker. (*Applause*) Working in retail myself I see the real personal side to this motion. You, the customer, come into store and see workers like me. You do this because you want assistance from a real person. You might want knowledge, or you might want the product there and then. You want to see that product. You want to feel that product. You want to check it is not cheap imported rubbish. You want the product there and then, you do not want to wait two, three, sometimes four days for delivery. Congress, we need our shops, we need our high streets and we need workers with rights, not warehouses that are pushing people to pick it quickly to save you money, just like Amazon. Congress, I ask you to help keep our high streets alive. Support this motion. I second. (*Applause*)

JUNE MINNERY: Thank you. I call Motion 216.

SECURITY IN RETAIL STORES MOTION 216

216. SECURITY IN RETAIL STORES

This Congress calls for a minimum of one security guard in each retail store employing more than ten employees.

As a retail Branch, our members are increasingly frustrated at companies putting profits first before the safety of its employees.

Some of our high street retail stores have no security guards at all.

We are subjected daily to abuse and threats from customers and, at times, fear for our own safety.

We should not have to come to work fearing for our own safety.

ASHFIELD NO.1 BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

CAROL ROBERTSON (Midlands & East Coast): This Congress calls for a minimum of one security guard in each retail store employing more than 10 employees. As a retail branch our members are increasingly frustrated with companies putting profit first before the safety of its employees. Some of our high street retail stores have no security guards at all. We are subjected daily to abuse and threats from customers and at times fear for our own safety. We should not have to come to work fearing for our safety. Congress, please support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

JUNE MINNERY: Thank you. A seconder?

KAREN MORRELL (Midland & East Coast): Chair, Congress, more than 100 shop workers are attacked each day as knife crime becomes a big concern. This figure is worrying. The British Retail Consortium's Annual Retail Crime Survey found knives seem to be the weapon of choice. The survey recorded 47,000 violent incidents involving retail workers. Knives are being used for both high and low value thefts. I have actually had a Stanley knife pulled on me at work when I asked a man to come back into the store as he left without paying for his bottle of vodka. I was very lucky and I did not get attacked because he just ran off but not everyone is that lucky.

Before I leave this rostrum I just want to say that this is going to be my last Congress because I have taken on two foster children and they do have very, very complex needs and I am going to be there to support them through their life as I am going to keep them till they are adults. I would not have been able to do that or actually stand here and pass a motion or second a motion without everybody in this room, even the people at the table they have always been there for me. My region are amazing, Midland & East Coast, thank you so, so much.

I agree with this. All I am saying is do not change too much. When you get up here and you pass those motions and you present that out there, please, please, please, do not lose that fire in your belly because that is what changes things, and that means a lot to all of us, and means a lot to the workers. I am asking you to support this motion. Thank you so much for everything you have done for me and for my confidence over the years. I second. Thank you. *(Applause)*

JUNE MINNERY: Thank you. The mover of Motion 217, please?

**POLICE NUMBERS AND BETTER PROTECTION AND TRAINING FOR
DOOR SUPERVISORS
MOTION 217**

**217. POLICE NUMBERS AND BETTER PROTECTION AND TRAINING FOR DOOR
SUPERVISORS**

Since the Tory government introduced its programme of Austerity police numbers in the UK have fallen by over 21,000. This in addition has meant today that the police are often not able to provide adequate security for both public and private events. As a result, door supervisors and security guards and now frequently employed to police both private events and private properties, these range from shops to private parties. However, this increase in use of private security has often led to an increase in violence both by and against Door Supervisors and Security Guards and members of the public and at its worst leading to serious injury or even the death of a security officer or a member of the public.

This Congress calls on the GMB to call for a review of the role of door supervisors and security guards. This would include recruitment, training and spot checks by the police and licensing authorities. To ensure they are carrying out their role correctly and are licensed and trained properly.

Congress also calls on better protection for door supervisors and security guards and stiffer sentencing on those people who are found guilty of abusing or assaulting Security staff.

The GMB should also campaign to restore the police numbers to their 2009 level so that they can adequately maintain the security of the public attending events.

C60 CROYDON BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

AVA PAYNE (Southern): Chair, Congress, since the Tory government introduced their programme of austerity police numbers in the UK have fallen to an historic low while recorded crime is rising, it is rising faster than ever before, and it is having the effect that criminals are walking free. As violent crime has increased, as one of our colleagues has just said, and the police numbers are dwindling, security guards and door supervisors are being called on and used as the eyes and ears of the community where the police would previously have done that, and they are actually expected to fill the security vacuum. So, workers who are more likely to be on a low wage, on a zero-hours contract, and/or from a minority ethnic background, are being put onto the front line. They provide the security at pubs, clubs, restaurants, events, shopping centres, you name it, that's them but, unfortunately, the increasing violence generally at this time is becoming an intricate part of this role and the security officers are facing the real prospect of serious injury or even death on a daily basis.

An example is last year a Romanian security guard was on duty at a New Year Day party, his name was Tudor Simionov, and he had only been in the UK for two months and he had come here for a better life. At 5.30 a.m. the party was stormed by gatecrashers. Tudor tried to fight them off and was stabbed. At 6.05, aged 33, Tudor Simionov was dead. That, unfortunately, is the reality of what some of these workers are having to face.

Security guards are not police officers and should not be used to shore up declining police numbers. They do, however, have a role to play and should be properly trained to carry it out. They should be properly trained and they should be fully protected when they are doing the things that they are doing.

This Congress calls on GMB for a review of the role of security officers and door supervisors to ensure they are carrying out their role correctly and are licensed and trained properly. Congress also calls on better protection for security staff and stiffer

sentencing on those people who are found guilty of assaulting or abusing them. Along with that the GMB should also campaign to restore the police numbers to their previous levels so that they can adequately maintain the security of the public at large. Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

JUNE MINNERY: Thank you. Secunder?

DAVID McMULLEN (Southern): Congress, Chair, I am seconding the Motion 217, policing and better protection and training for door supervisors and calling on Congress to address the issue of the reduced levels of policing numbers which has left them unable to guarantee security for both private and public events. This in turn has left security guards and door supervisors burdened with the responsibility of making up for the shortfall. Our response is simple, we need to ensure that there is adequate protection for security staff and door supervisors as well as for the general public, and we call for a review of the role of security guard and door supervisors by working with providers and partners, including the police and licensing authorities, to ensure that what can often be a dangerous unregulated sector carries out its role correctly and with adequate licensing and training provided. It would offer protection to both security staff and door supervisors as well as the wider public with whom they interact.

I urge Congress and the GMB to make a demonstrated commitment to our members in the industry. I also call for stiffer sentencing for those found guilty of abuse or assault of security guards and door supervisors and, secondly, urgently to step up GMB's campaign to restore police numbers to an adequate safe level able to maintain the security of the general public at events and calling on the Government to invest in the recruitment and retention of police officers to ensure the numbers never again fall to such critical levels. Congress, I second. *(Applause)*

JUNE MINNERY: Thank you, colleague. The mover of Motion 218, please?

SECURITY OFFICERS NOT GETTING LEGAL HOLIDAYS MOTION 218

218. SECURITY OFFICERS NOT GETTING LEGAL HOLIDAYS

This Congress is concerned that some security companies are hiding behind the law of refusing holidays.

The Working Time Regulations 1988 details the right for an employer to refuse a holiday request. The law states that the employer must give notice of refusal that is equal to the length of the holiday requested, which has never happened.

Employers in the security industry deliberately deny holiday requests and manage out peoples' leave, knowing that officers will not be able to carry their holidays over for next year.

Minimum holiday entitlements are a vital part of reducing overwork. Security Officers who work excessive hours are at risk of developing heart disease, stress, mental illness, strokes, and diabetes, which also impacts on co-workers, friends and relatives.

We call on Congress to grant new powers to the HSE to clamp down in employers who deny our Security Officers their statutory holiday entitlement. This would include the power to ensure that workers are fully compensated for missed holidays.

Congress, we call for the government to toughen up enforcement and stop bosses cheating staff/officers out of their leave.

GMB LONDON SECURITY BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

GORDON BRUNNING (London): Holiday, a period of rest, relaxation, away from the working environment, as defined by the Working Time Regulations. It goes on to highlight that in protecting employees' health and wellbeing it is essential that they have regular periods of holiday to enable them to rest and recover from the stresses of working life. Security officer, a recognised profession with professional standards and regulations and like all other professions comes with statutory rights, annual holiday. The same regulations state that an employer has the right to refuse annual holiday but must give notice to refusal, and the length of refusal of the holiday request. Some unscrupulous employers across the security sector and security industry deliberately and continually deny annual leave requests knowing that if they do so often enough the security officer in their employ will not be able to carry over their annual leave because of contractual restraints, therefore not allowing employees to take their statutory holiday entitlement, which is an absolute disgrace. This is nothing more than a moneymaking exercise designed by disreputable employers seeking simply to bolster management bonuses and shareholder dividends at the sheer expense of the worker's health and wellbeing. The right to take annual leave is critical in the fight to maintaining positive mental health and reducing working overload, stress, and other mental health issues alongside physical issues.

As an industry we call on the GMB Congress to lobby Government at the highest level to encourage tougher enforcement of the Working Time Regulations and to work actively with the HSE in gaining new powers to clamp down on unscrupulous employers who deliberately deny holiday entitlements, to name and shame those employers that deliberately circumvent existing legislation, and for GMB National Office to fully engage in urgent and meaningful consultation with leading UK security companies to ensure this disgraceful and unscrupulous practice is stopped immediately. Your full support for this motion is critical in maintaining the legal rights for our members and vital in safeguarding the health and wellbeing of our members working in the security industry. Please support the motion. I move. Thank you. *(Applause)*

JUNE MINNERY: Thank you, colleague. Secunder?

MARIA JENNINGS (London): How are we going to stop this exploitation and intimidation? I want to take you back to 1945. We have seen the recent celebration or commemoration for the D-Day landings of those brave soldiers. Those soldiers knew what exploitation and intimidation was in the 1930s. Losing a job and the intimidation from an employer could result in the death of a child if losing your job meant that there was no money for medicine or for a doctor's visit. Those soldiers voted Labour, overwhelmingly, in 1945. They voted for a welfare state with a national insurance officer to stop that exploitation and intimidation. We need a national insurance officer now and today. To get a national insurance officer we need a Labour government led by Jeremy Corbyn but with workers' rights at the top of the

list. Let's make sure that GMB calls for a national insurance officer to be part of the next Labour manifesto. I second. *(Applause)*

JUNE MINNERY: Thank you. Motion 219?

PRIVATE HIRE DRIVING TEST MOTION 219

219. PRIVATE HIRE DRIVING TEST

This Congress proposes that all drivers on acceptance of their application for Private Hire Drivers Licence should, after fulfilling all the requirements, be subject to a driving assessment similar to the test a Taxi driver has to take before his licence is issued.

This will confirm their ability to drive in a safe manner and show their understanding of the rules and laws of driving in this country. As the ability to speak, read or write English has no bearing whatsoever on a person's ability to drive in a competent and safe manner.

GMB PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS BRANCH
London Region

(Referred)

DAVID REID (London): Private hire driving standards have got to a very low rate of late putting the public at much greater risk of either being hurt as a pedestrian or as a passenger. Some of these accidents seem to be because of a lack of understanding of how the British road rules work or because people just do not drive safely enough to be driving the public about. In most driving jobs it is a requirement of some type of test. It is taken to prove you can drive safely and have a good working understanding of the laws of the roads of Britain. Did you know the car which is most likely to have an accident in Britain is a Toyota Prius, according to official data in 2016. It will come as no surprise that that is the favourite car for private hire companies: the drivers because it is a hybrid car and offers good value for those who employ it. However, to pay it off is a higher rate of accident than the good old London taxi and the local area taxis in the UK, which I was shocked to learn. I am sure it will not be a surprise to many UK's licensing officers. You actually have to pass a test to prove you can drive safely and understand the road laws but you do not have to pass a test for a private hire car in London, and several other cities.

As this motion says, let's make it that people driving the public around take a driving test to prove they can do it safely and with good understanding of the rules of the road. So I call on all Congress members to stand behind me and vote for this motion to be carried and make our roads safer and protect all. Thanks. *(Applause)*

JUNE MINNERY: Thank you. seconder?

MARY GOODSON (London): The explosion of private hire apps UK wide has created a promised land beyond all riches and the reality is that this has sent individuals into a land where they believe they will become entrepreneurs without any major training and expect untold riches. Coming from an ex-London black cab driver it is not true. With so many drivers chasing the next journey or working in unfamiliar locations as well as following a navigation device, generally on a mobile phone, drivers are making mistakes. You cannot give a surgeon a scalpel without thorough

training so why would you not expect a professional driver to have thorough training and examinations. It is bad enough that the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency stopped offering tests in 2017. This proves the Government does not care about public safety. Even a bona fide commercial test would make a difference to public safety. Surely, as a union we must show that unless we push licensing authorities to implement an efficient structure for private hire drivers in cases such as London accidents will continue to increase. I second. (*Applause*)

JUNE MINNERY: Thank you. Does anyone wish to speak in opposition to any of these motions? Okay, I will ask Michael Husbands from the CEC to speak on them.

MICHAEL HUSBANDS (CEC, Commercial Services): Good afternoon, Chair. Congress, speaking on behalf of the CEC on Motions 213 and 219.

On Motion 213, Retail Jobs, the CEC is asking for this motion to be referred. We would like to research more the impact a change to a sales tax would have on the economy and jobs. We will do this research and decide when it is best to report.

On Motion 219, Private Hire Driving Test, the CEC is asking for this motion also to be referred. The main statement of this motion is a separate assessment on driving competence and one that can enhance passenger safety. However, the motion strays into an area which potentially challenges the notion that having the ability to converse, read, and write, does not enhance a driver's competence. This particular area needs to be looked at further before we could agree that this is a true statement. The CEC would like to refer this motion so that the CEC and London Region can make an assessment of how to proceed, taking into account the current government consultation on this issue.

Therefore, Congress, we are asking for Motion 213 and Motion 219 to be referred. Thank you. (*Applause*)

JUNE MINNERY: Thank you. Does Birmingham & West Midlands Region agree to refer Motion 213? Yes. Thank you. Does London Region agree to refer Motion 219? Yes. Thank you. I will go to the votes. On Motion 208 the CEC is supporting. All those in favour please show. Any against? That is carried.

Motion 208 was CARRIED.

JUNE MINNERY: Motion 210, the CEC is supporting. All those in favour please show. Anyone against? That is carried.

Motion 210 was CARRIED.

JUNE MINNERY: Motion 213, Birmingham & West Midlands have agreed to refer. All those in favour. Any against?

Motion 213 was REFERRED.

JUNE MINNERY: Motion 216, the CEC is supporting. All those in favour please show. Any against? That is carried.

Motion 216 was CARRIED.

JUNE MINNERY: Motion 217, the CEC is supporting. All those in favour please show. That is carried.

Motion 217 was CARRIED.

JUNE MINNERY: Motion 218, the CEC is supporting. All those in favour please show. Anyone against? That is carried.

Motion 218 was CARRIED.

JUNE MINNERY: Finally, in this section Motion 219, London have agreed to refer. All those in favour please show. Anyone against. That is carried.

Motion 219 was REFERRED.

SOCIAL POLICY: ENERGY AND UTILITIES

JUNE MINNERY: Thanks very much. Can the movers and seconders of Social Policy: Energy and Utilities motions please make your way to the front. That is C17, Motions 385, 386, 387, C18, Motions 390 and 391. I call Composite 17 first. Thank you.

THE GAS INDUSTRY COMPOSITE MOTION 17

(Covering Motions 382, 383, 384)

382 – Keep the Gas Industry Open – London Region

383 – Resist Closing the Gas Industry – Southern Region

384 – Gas Industry – Northern Region

This Congress is alarmed that the Government is taking a very hands off approach to our gas industry and the potential threat to thousands of GMB members and their families. Congress notes that the UK climate causes invariably a heating crisis each winter, with uncertain supply of gas as a vital UK energy resource.

Congress believes that the UK's gas storage requirement is woefully inadequate and not fit for purpose, which by itself could cost jobs with the very real possibility that industrial users will be required to limit their usage of gas on an on-going basis.

In the light of recent announcements over previous months that some companies are shelving energy storage projects, Congress believes the Government must now step in to defend our national interest to make sure consumers and industrial users are protected from volatile prices which insufficient storage brings.

Congress notes that in August 2018 Friends of the Earth produced a report on home heating agitating for gas to be replaced for home heating in the UK.

This Congress strongly opposes the call by Friends of the Earth for the UK to close down the gas industry and instead use electricity and other systems for heating of homes in the UK.

The report called for closing down the gas industry with the loss of tens of thousands of gas workers jobs. It also called for every household to rip out existing heating systems. Friends of

the Earth estimate that it would cost up to £10,000 per household for new systems when existing boilers and radiators and pipes are scrapped. Energy bills for heating would treble. Massive new energy sources would be needed to supply probably four times more electricity than we currently consume in the UK.

In addition to these cost per household are the costs of installing the huge expansion in energy sources that would be needed to generate and distribute electricity to heat homes. Estimates vary but it is likely that electricity consumption on home heating, even with maximum insulation, to replace gas would expand by capacity by more than 400% .

Friends of the Earth don't like nuclear power stations. The power, they say, would come from intermittent sources like wind, solar and other renewable energy sources, to generate electricity to heat homes at three times the current price for gas. When the wind is not blowing, then is the plan to switch off power to factories and homes and to import power from other countries and use not yet developed sources?

This is not a plan GMB members or the electorate are likely to support.

Congress considers this to be a grossly irresponsible and hugely expensive plan for the UK energy mix.

Across the world, nuclear power stations, renewables and gas as a transition fuel are seen as the way to reduce carbon emissions as the global economy moves to low and zero carbon energy sources.

Internationally gas is seen as a stepping stone fuel to reduce carbon emissions as the global economy transitions to low carbon energy sources. In this international energy mix are renewable energy sources, nuclear power stations and gas for space heating. Global warming is a global matter that only action on a global scale can deal with it. The UK should be part of the global policy response to the global problem of global warming. Attempts by organizations like Friends of the Earth for the UK to unilaterally get ahead of the international movement as a gesture to "show leadership" should be resisted as expensive and futile.

Congress rejects any unilateral action by the UK to show leadership by closing the gas industry as a very expensive and futile gesture.

Congress welcomes the Just Transition statement by the four energy unions including GMB.

Congress calls on the Central Executive Council to strongly and sternly resist the imposition and the attempts to levy these charges on hard pressed GMB members' households and to resist all attempts to close the gas industry and to oppose closure of the gas industry on energy and environmental grounds.

Congress endorses previous GMB energy policy priorities for reliable, reasonable prices and low carbon energy sources with subsidies to be paid from general taxation.

GMB should campaign for a low carbon economy with four basic principles: reliable, reasonably priced , low and zero carbon energy sources with subsidies to be paid to investors funded from general taxpayers. GMB should now focus on "how" we move to this low carbon future in line with these principles.

These huge decisions on the exact energy mix and prices and who pays the subsidies should be determined by government and Parliament with households and taxpayers centre stage in these discussions. It is time to add actual substance to the call for a Just Transition.

Congress calls on both the Government and the Labour Party if in Government, to recognise that in the real world, gas is going to be needed to heat our homes as part of a diverse energy mix whilst we transition to a lower carbon economy.

(Carried)

SYED RAZA (Southern): Congress, the issue is not whether we as a global economy cut carbon emissions but how and on what timescale. It is essential that action is on a global scale with all the big players, China, India, and USA, etc, on board. In the UK we need to challenge the imperial pretensions of some carried away activists and politicians that Britain has to be the global leader in solving this global scale problem. We need to get on to the earth. The UK accounts for less than 2% of global emissions. If we cut to zero tomorrow it will make very little difference. The big blocks across the world are planning to build a further 1,892 coal-fired stations. This is a 50% increase on the 3,740 that now we have. I do not have time to name these countries but we are in the UK closing the few we have. You hear over and over that the UK is the sixth richest country in the world. This is comparing apples and oranges. Looking at the GDP per head the UK is 30th in the world league. We are higher than the countries with much higher incomes than us, like Holland in the south league. We have a bigger and growing population but the matter is we are in part of the league. No one would call on the likes of Southampton and Brighton in our region to assume leadership of the Premier League but this is what the Greens are doing and not being challenged.

The motion challenges an energy and climate change case for ending the gas industry in the foreseeable future. We need it for a low carbon emissions future. The motion also challenges the political case for ending the gas industry. The UK Labour government needs to learn lessons from the recent elections in Australia. The Australian Labour Party set out the aim of 45% cut of the 2005 emissions by 2030. It was on the back foot through all the campaigns trying to explain how to do it and who would pay. It lost an election it was expected to win. UK Labour should set out the general directions of travel, take the electorate with them, and never forget the global issue; above all drive the imperial intentions of moving faster than the other nations like ourselves. We need a successful and prosperous UK with a low carbon future, we need more renewables, a fleet of six nuclear power stations and gas, including hydrogen, for home heating, green levies should be paid from the general taxation, not the hard pressed member's households, this is something realistically that the electorate will buy into. I move this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

JUNE MINNERY: Thank you. A seconder please.

LINDA SERRECHIA (Northern): When energy companies were privatised we were promised the earth. The reality is different. People question whether they should eat or put the heating on. Energy companies fix prices and pass them on to us. Government does not want to interfere in the market. Government and companies have said they are shelving energy storing projects. 25,000 GMB members' jobs are at stake.

Congress, lawmakers should work to put energy policy on a more long-term footing. Jobs will be created by UK suppliers and storage. This is not just about the price we pay for energy; it is about meeting basic needs such as heating our homes and our businesses. Congress, let's be clear, we need to own our own UK energy supply so that we are not subject to events abroad. Public money should be spent on a diverse energy mix and new facilities and storage. We recognise the diverse nature of energy on production and supplies. We are committed to the UK having a better carbon

footprint but we need the Government and Labour opposition to commit to the gas industry. If we have a diverse energy mix we will retain jobs and income and we will meet basic needs such as heating and lighting. Please support. (*Applause*)

JUNE MINNERY: Thank you. Is there one more colleague on Composite 17?

PAUL BLOCK (London): This motion, as you just heard, is about keeping the gas industry open, Composite 17. Congress, I find it truly amazing, to be honest with you that I am even standing here talking to you about this, about the proposed closure of the gas industry. This has been proposed by Friends of the Earth. I believe that the effects of this on the eco will be truly devastating. I do not just refer to the tens of thousands of our members' jobs that would go as this would have a very detrimental effect on those already in fuel poverty, many of whom are elderly, poor, sick. It is also worth stating now that this would put a lot more people into fuel poverty as the cost of heating homes with gas is a quarter of that it would cost to heat the homes with electricity. Friends of the Earth have estimated that the cost of replacing existing gas central heating systems would be a meagre £10,000. This also assumes that there is a capability to generate enough electricity to meet this increased demand and, guess what, Friends of the Earth do not like nuclear power either.

The UK is a very long way from being able to scrap the gas as we still rely heavily on gas to generate electricity and renewable sources of energy will not provide a stable enough source on their own to generate enough electricity. Alternatives are out there. Surely, we should explore these if we convert from natural gas to a hydrogen mix, mixing both gases can cut the carbon emissions by up to about 18% and this does not involve changes to domestic appliances, boilers and stuff like that at home would still work fine. Basically, I think the GMB should appeal to our politicians to review this proposal and look at alternatives that can prevent this throwing more people into fuel poverty. Thank you, Congress. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. The mover of Motion 385?

GAS SUPPLY TO NEW BUILD PROPERTIES MOTION 385

385. GAS SUPPLY TO NEW BUILD PROPERTIES

This Congress calls on GMB to pursue National Government and the Labour Party to adopt a policy of reintroduction of the installation of gas supplies to all new build properties where access to mains gas is possible.

Congress, we would be doing a massive disservice to new property owners, and importantly our members working in the gas industry, if we as a trade union do not challenge the policy of non-installation of gas into new properties.

Homes that are not connected to the national gas network are roughly one and a half time more likely to fall into fuel poverty. On average a UK home with a central heating system can expect to pay over the course of a year about £550 when using gas as the primary heat source; this compares favourably when a similar system using electricity will cost on average £900.

Gas companies are currently using technology to explore and trial the use of a Hydrogen Methane mix; this cleaner gas mix will assist any government in delivering on the UK's

Commitments under the Paris Treaty which aims to reduce carbon emissions and greenhouse gasses between 2020 and 2050.

Colleagues, the GMB trade union was born out of the gas industry. The GMB supports an energy mix which will deliver the best value to its members and other gas customers; secure the jobs of thousands of GMB members in the gas industry and it also recognises the need to secure the supply of energy to the UK into the future.

L34 BRANCH
North West & Irish Region

(Carried)

DAVID KNOWLES (North West & Irish): First-time delegate, first-time speaker. *(Applause)* This Congress calls on GMB to pursue national government and the Labour Party to adopt a policy of reintroduction of the installation of gas supplies to all new build properties where access to mains gas is possible. Congress, we will be doing a disservice to new properties owners and importantly our members working in the as industry if we as a trade union do not challenge the policy of non-installation of gas into new properties. Homes that are not connected to the national gas network are roughly one-and-a-half times more likely to fall into UK fuel poverty. An average UK home with a central heating system can expect to pay over the course of a year about £550 when using gas as the primary heat source. This compares favourably when a similar system using electricity will cost on average £900.

Gas companies are currently using technology to explore and trial the use of hydrogen methane mix. This cleaner gas mix will assist any government in delivering the Paris Treaty which aims to reduce carbon emissions and greenhouse gases between 2020 and 2050. Colleagues, the GMB trade union was born out of the gas industry. The GMB supports an energy mix which will deliver the best value to its members and other gas customers, secure the jobs of thousands of GMB members in the gas industry and it also recognises the need to secure the supply of energy in the future. Congress, I move. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, David. Seconder?

PATRICK DELAHUNTY (North West & Irish): Colleagues, I have been around the gas industry for a long time and I must pay credit to the GMB and the lay delegates that support the National Officer in the difficult times we have had since privatisation. The reality is the backbone of the resolution that you have just heard is about retention of labour and expanding the workforce. We can only do that if we get the political will of the country so it is essential that every gas worker and every member of this union supports the Labour Party in its quest to renationalise the gas industry and give support to our members within that industry. Thank you. I second. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Patrick. The mover of Motion 386.

FRACKING MOTION 386

386. FRACKING

1. This Congress recognises that there are now over 300 community groups opposing fracking in their areas and are demanding a say on the decision on exploration and extraction. Whilst our union's position on fracking was considered at Annual Congress held in Brighton in June 2018, since then a number of factors have changed or come to light of such significance and asks that Congress allows GMB members the opportunity to reconsider our position on fracking namely:
 - (a) New evidence in the form of a Government report from their own Air Quality Expert how fracking has negative impact on air quality published July 2018
 - (b) And the number of earthquakes since fracking began at Preston New Road in October 2018
 - (c) New undemocratic planning proposals to bypass the democratic planning process of local authorities ("permitted development"), consulted on between July and October 2018
 - (d) The growing number of countries that have banned fracking including since Congress 2018, the Republic of Ireland
 - (e) An alternative to maintain and creating jobs now being offered by the Labour Party when in government in addition to further study and work by Just Transition movement.

2. The branch therefore calls on Congress to:
 - (a) Support local groups opposing fracking in their area
 - (b) Call for full democratic involvement of local authorities in granting permission for exploratory and substantive drilling
 - (c) Recognise that fracking is a threat to the change to a low carbon economy and support the Labour Party and the Just Transition movement in involvement of all stakeholders in the change to a low carbon economy that benefits our members and protects the environment
 - (d) Support a cessation of drilling immediately where adverse environmental effects occur, such as poor air quality and seismic action
 - (e) To recognise the change and further evidence now in the public domain to reconsider its position and change policy to be in line with the rest of the trade union movement, the Labour Party, other countries and call for a ban on fracking.

SHEFFIELD MCP & LIGHT BRANCH
 Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Withdrawn)

SHELAGH CARTER (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): In this issue I have no wish for members working in the energy industry to be disadvantaged, indeed we should be getting good green energy jobs using the skills and products made by workers in this country and not from abroad, jobs that support our steel industry for starters. However, I feel I have to speak on the issue of fracking for environmental reasons. As you know, fracking is all about drilling into the earth to collect shale gas, a type of hydrocarbon which when burned gives off carbon dioxide and water as well as heat and energy. In an increasingly warming world due to the release of carbon dioxide and the greenhouse effect we should seriously look at greener ways to meet our energy needs. If we carry on doing what we have always done we will soon run out of time to stop irreversible damage to our planet.

There are alternatives to bring about reducing our carbon footprint, solar, wind, and wave technology are some of them. The first turbine at the world's biggest offshore wind farm has been installed and is now producing electricity. When fully operational Hornsea One offshore wind farm will nearly double the size of the current

world's largest offshore wind farm at Walney and is capable of powering well over one million UK homes with renewable electricity generated by wind. If we can safely harness the use of hydrogen gas in boilers and in cars, its only by-product of combustion is water. I am sure there must be other green technologies out there waiting to be developed.

In our 130th year the GMB needs to look and prepare for the future and that future lies with the younger generation. We need to recruit young members to continue the legacy of Will Thorne whose words described: "There is a world of freedom, beauty and equality to gain, where everyone will have an opportunity to express the best that is in them for the benefit of all, making the world a place more to our heart's desire and the better to dwell in."

If we consider Greta Thunberg who at 16 years old inspires the young people of the world to act by striking from school, the message coming back is loud and clear, that the young people consider that the decision-makers of today are ruining their planet and their future by continually looking for carbon emitting fuels. The world's people have spoken, time is running out, and they want you the decision-makers to act now. Leaders of the world you must lead. The continuation of civilisation and the natural world upon which we depend is in your hands. Congress, for the sake of the planet, and generations to come, I move. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Secunder?

WARREN SMITH (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): First-time delegate and first-time speaker. (*Applause*) President, Congress, this year we have seen massive seismic movements throughout the UK and I am not talking about when Cuadrilla starts up its fracking operations in Preston New Road, Blackpool, and creates the earthquakes. The seismic movements I am talking about is where thousands or tens of thousands of young people across this country have walked out of their lessons in schools and colleges to flood into our towns and city centres to protest about the lack of action on climate change. (*Applause*) They have marched under the banner of Youth Strike for Climate Justice. Thousands of young adults in climate action groups, such as Extinction Rebellion, have taken the streets in London. They closed down Oxford Street for a full week to get people to take notice of what they were saying on this issue. People of my generation, they are angry towards us because for years now we have known about the damage we are doing to this planet but let's admit it, we have not had the will or the vision to take any action. We have just carried on destroying the planet and the young people are telling us they need us to listen to them now. (*Applause*)

The United Nations Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change has recently estimated that we have only 11 years left to change the planet otherwise the damage we do will be totally irreversible; we will never get it back. This year on Saddleworth Moor in Yorkshire, where I come from, we saw wild fires, in February, because of the high temperatures that we had back in that time. It is not a good thing, comrades.

THE PRESIDENT: Warren, can you come to a conclusion, please.

WARREN SMITH (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Okay. The fracking companies are only interested in making profits. We were told it would be safe. We are told that they will follow regulations. Don't believe it. They will cut corners, they will cut costs, and they will put the planet in danger. Let's tell the frackers to frack off!

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Warren.

WARREN SMITH (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): However, the region has listened to what the CEC has had to say. We have had our say on this but we are willing to withdraw the motion this time. We will be back. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Warren, for that clarity. Thank you. The mover of Motion 387, please.

NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING AUTHORITY (NDA) MOTION 387

387. NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING AUTHORITY (NDA)

This Congress is appalled that the Government is not serious about the future of the UK's domestic energy supply and is being cavalier with how the UK tries to become self-sufficient in providing our own energy needs. Congress notes that the NDA by its very name is focused on running down the nuclear industry. Congress believes that Government should scrap the NDA as it currently exists and a re-tasked Nuclear Development Agency created to make sure nuclear new build projects and the accompanying creation of thousands of new jobs and apprenticeships, go ahead.

Congress believes that the NDA must be immediately given a role for nuclear development and tasked with ensuring we have security of supply in years to come. Congress calls on the Labour Party to signal its intentions on a Nuclear Development Agency as part of its programme to become the next Government.

T25 – NEWCASTLE & NORTH TYNE GENERAL BRANCH
Northern Region

(Carried)

ANGELA HAY (Northern): Congress, across the sector we have GMB members employed in it. For example, we have GMB members employed in gas, electricity, offshore wind farm sector, nuclear, and the National Grid. Without the GMB members the energy sector would be on its knees. Likewise, our members need the energy sector. Countless numbers of the communities rely on the work and our members rely on us to do the best for them. The NDA, as it is called, seems only to be interested in running the nuclear industry down. It has failed to make the case for key new projects. The failure of the NDA to make the case to government in relation to the Moorside project in West Cumbria is a case in point. The NDA also explored the connection to the National Grid and Sellafield to see if any new work could be opened up. The failure of the Moorside project has put back any development by at least ten years. Thousands of workers would be employed in the new build in both construction and process work.

Congress, the NDA in its current form should be replaced. It should be replaced with a more forward looking organisation. This should be a new agency that is based on developing new projects. The new agency also should oversee places like Sellafield

on a safe and secure basis. Congress, this country needs regulators and operators that place the country's energy future on a safe and secure footing. We need security of supplies for generations to come. We need politicians who understand that. That is why we call on our friends in the Labour Party to say what their intentions are as they put together the programme to be the next government. Our members and their families will expect that. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Angela. Secunder? Formally. Thank you, Northern. Composite 18 mover, please.

NUCLEAR NEW BUILD COMPOSITE MOTION 18

(Covering Motions 388 and 389)

388 – Nuclear Build – Northern Region

389 – Public Investment in New Nuclear Power Stations – London Region

This Congress notes the future of proposed new build nuclear power stations in parts of the UK has been put at risk with some recent announcements from companies operating within the Private Sector.

In addition Congress notes with huge regret, the failure of Government to consider underwriting nuclear new build projects or to take a more interventionist approach to meeting its own basic responsibilities which is to guarantee we have enough electricity for our homes and industries.

This Congress views with concerns the collapse of private sector investment into new nuclear power stations in Cumbria and North Wales.

A fleet of at least six new nuclear power stations are needed to provide reliable zero carbon electricity to replace coal powered stations being phased out and existing nuclear power stations nearing the end of operating life.

There is currently no other low or zero carbon reliable source of electricity available to keep the nation running on the one in six days on average when the wind is not blowing and the frequent periods when there is no sun. Claims to the contrary by Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth are just claims. The reality is that these organisations have no viable plan to move the global economy to a reliable low carbon cost effective energy future. When the policy of relying on renewable energy sources alone was tried in Australia it led to electricity blackouts and has been abandoned.

There are some politicians in the Labour Party that are advocating for the UK to make this same policy mistake to rely on renewable energy sources alone. Congress calls on the Central Executive Council to strongly resist attempts to make this Labour Party or UK Government policy.

Congress calls for public investment to build the new fleet of at least six new nuclear power stations in the same way that public investment was used to build the first generation of existing nuclear power stations.

Congress endorses previous GMB energy policy to retask the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority into the Nuclear Development Authority with responsibility to ensure that the fleet of at least six new nuclear power stations are on stream in time to meet carbon emissions reduction targets. Only Hinkley Point C is being built with investment from companies owned by the French and Chinese Governments. Congress calls on the UK Government to follow suit and get on with building the needed stations in Cumbria, North Wales, Gloucestershire, Essex and Suffolk.

Congress calls for a radical rethink to how Government is approaching this vital sector. Congress calls on the Labour Party to provide a clear and unambiguous message to GMB members that they will guarantee that nuclear new build projects that are currently stalled, will go ahead under a Labour Government.

(Carried)

LIAM POLLARD (London): Congress, I work in the energy industry. I work in gas, and I work for the National Grid. If you see how they try to regulate your electricity supply it is very hard. It is hard to make sure the power is there when you need it and it is hard to make sure there is not too much power there when you do not. You are watching a match, half-time you come out and switch the kettle on. They have to be there before you. They have to have the supply there and if it goes pop and stops, you will not be happy. You want to have a cup of tea. You are going to have a right hump. I have heard the things that have been said here today. I like renewables. You are driving down the motorway, there is a load of them up there and they are all stopped, and they are not spinning. We are paying for them. I think they are good and I think they are right and I think it is the way forward, but they are not the total answer. They are never going to supply us for the next five, six, seven, eight, ten years with continuity of supply. We have no continuity of supply. Half of our gas and electric comes from abroad now. I am going to challenge Congress to make a thing that any new government who comes in, we have to rattle their cages. We need six new nuclear power stations. We need them built now or our kids in the future are going to live in a different world. I will just tell you, our Government says now it is going to build 250,000 homes with no gas. What are they going to run on, electric?

Congress, we call for public investment to build the new fleet of nuclear power stations in the same way as the public investment was used to build the first generation, the ones that got me through my first 40 years. We have to build them in Cumbria, North Wales, Gloucestershire, Essex, and Suffolk and we have to use our money to do it, and our government has to do it, not some dodgy French people coming in with a dodgy reactor paid for by the Chinese, who will then put your price of electric up through the roof. Continuity of supply we need and security of supply, and we need to do that for our grandchildren. All the other stuff is very, very nice but we have to grow up, we have to do what it says up there, grow, build, and change. That is very hard for us. I agree with Steve, who I have never agreed with years ago. As a young man I was a bit of a rebel, but what I know now it is for my grandchildren and great grandchildren, they need to have electricity, to have the things that I had, and that is the only way to do it. I move that Congress challenges this Government to build those six new reactors and start building them now because it may take five years and in five years' time it will be different. Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Liam. Well done. Secunder?

DIANE ROBERTSON (Northern): Congress, we fully support a mixed energy. We want an energy policy that is about people and the UK to produce and supply our own energy. Where I live and work, without the nuclear sector jobs, skills, and income would be lost. The area would struggle. Nuclear is about health, safety, and security. When it comes to nuclear new build this Government has left it to the private sector in financing and delivery. That is how they do it in America and parts of the Far East. We have seen what happened with the Government on the other side, it refers to a

private sector consortium which included Toshiba. When Toshiba had major financial problems the Government then turned to South Korea. Not once did the UK Government think about the UK delivering the project. As regards the financing of the project, this Government believes the only way is by the private sector.

Congress, people expect more from government, they have a duty to keep things moving and to keep the lights on, and to have safe and secure energy so that future generations have jobs and income, and the country has the energy it needs to develop. This Government is finished. We need to be ready for the next election. That means we need to see what the Labour Party is going to do about new build in nuclear. Labour has an opportunity to carry out GMB policy and our communities need to know just who is on their side. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Well done, Diane. The mover of Motion 390.

DECENT JOBS IN THE RENEWABLES ENERGY INDUSTRY MOTION 390

390. DECENT JOBS IN THE RENEWABLES ENERGY INDUSTRY

This Congress recognises that renewable energy sources are a valuable and growing source of low carbon electricity into the national grid. Congress also recognises that for some time subsidies will need to be paid to investors to develop and run these energy sources.

Following the principle that those who pay the piper must call the tune, big changes are needed to ensure that companies in the renewables energy sector are obliged, as a condition of the subsidies being paid, to have a UK based supply chain for developing and running the industry and for the workers who are directly employed and or by contractors to be covered by collective bargaining agreements.

Congress calls for specific measures to make this happen.

1. There has to be an official register of all companies in the sector who are in receipt of public subsidies from household energy bills or from taxpayers. No company registered offshore in a tax haven would be eligible to be on the register to be paid subsidies. It should be clear who the beneficial owners are of all companies on the register and how much subsidies they are paid each year.
2. As a condition of each new project being awarded subsidies, a high percentage of the agreed supply chain for developing and running the project should be sourced in the UK.
3. Companies on the register and all their contractors building and running projects should be covered by a new national recognition and collective bargaining agreement which would apply to all workers in the sector.
4. Subsidies as a matter of principle should be paid to investors from a progressive general taxation system. The current system of adding what in effect are subsidies to household energy bills is grossly unfair for the majority of the lowest paid workers in the UK. By 2022 the Office for Budget Responsibility says that this will amount to more than £10 per week on household energy bills.

Congress calls on the Labour Party and TUC to adopt these measures to secure decent jobs in the renewables industry and its supply chain.

BARKING & DAGENHAM LGO BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

PAUL BLOCK (London): I ask Congress to agree this motion to enable the GMB to lobby MPs and Government for decent jobs in the renewables energy industry. This is a matter of fair play as other jobs in the UK energy industry on the whole are decent jobs. These workplaces generally have trade union recognition agreements and are organised with collective bargaining agreements in place. It would therefore be very unfair not to apply the same standards to the growing number of jobs in the renewables industry.

The other argument for this is that these workplaces would be better organised and have higher standards of health and safety, pay, and general terms and conditions. There is, as we all know, growing pressure on the UK to adopt renewable energy. It is recognised that once installed this offers a low carbon source of energy. It should also be obvious that the equipment used is produced and manufactured in the UK so that we are not importing equipment that could have been manufactured here, and shipping equipment from abroad, as this is obviously not environmentally friendly as big ships use a lot of diesel to move equipment around.

It is also obvious to anyone who has worked within the energy industry that successive governments have not shown a lot of joined-up thinking or stuck to a clear policy. This relatively new industry needs to be properly set up with secure jobs that encourage good staff retention and hence work reliably well into the future. The jobs involved in the supply of materials and manufacturing are also important as these, if carried out in the UK, can be done professionally and in a way that minimises the impact of the processes concerned on the environment.

This industry is and will be for the foreseeable future a growth industry and will carry on evolving as technology improves and new ideas and innovations are brought into service. It will play an important part as security of supply, as you just heard from my colleague, Liam, is going to be critical, in other words, keeping the lights on. As this is such an important industry to the UK in terms of keeping the country running, it follows you should require the jobs to be secure with good terms and conditions and I make no apology for labouring this point. It therefore follows that all these jobs should be trade unionised, in my belief, and I am quite sure that Congress would agree this is the best way of securing the future of the industry in the UK. Thank you, Congress. I move this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. Secunder?

GAVIN DOWNEY (London): We have heard from colleagues who have spoken about the loss of jobs in many industries throughout the UK. We have a highly skilled workforce that the Government have failed. The renewable energy industry is a vital part of our energy provision, one that the world needs. The Government talks about reducing carbon emissions. These renewables are one way to achieve this. However, many jobs that could be kept within this country are given away to companies who build the infrastructure abroad. We need to lobby Government to keep these jobs within our country and to ensure that the jobs are long-term and that the companies who win the contracts work ethically, and there is a check on any public subsidies that are not given to companies who will not provide jobs for our members, who have been let down by this Tory government. I urge Congress to support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gavin. The mover of Motion 391.

ENERGY MERGERS MOTION 391

391. ENERGY MERGERS

Congress notes that a recent proposed merger of two of the UK's biggest energy firms was called off.

Congress believes that this is yet another example of the Government failing to protect UK workers as well as the supply of safe and secure energy, by the use of the market that this Government is responsible for.

Congress calls for an urgent review of the energy market so that the job security of thousands of GMB members is not put at risk by the reckless actions of both Energy Company Executives and this Government.

Congress calls on the Government calls on Ofgem to be replaced and its regulatory functions to be taken over by the Government and that Mergers within the Retail Energy Sector are given more scrutiny in Parliament. Congress calls on the Labour Opposition to adopt our policy as part of its policy platform for Government.

C52 – SOUTH EAST NORTHUMBERLAND GENERAL BRANCH
Northern Region

(Carried)

JOHN GRANT (Northern): Congress, the recent decision to call off the merger between NPower and SSE is a blessing in disguise. Indeed, this is a merger that should not have been thought about in the first place. Executive greed in the energy sector is allowed to happen because the Government allows it to take place. Congress, the energy privatisation was to be a guarantee for a better life for workers, consumers, business and shareholders. Those promises have been proven to be a load of hot air. Now both companies involved in this failed merger are talking about cutting jobs, indeed 900 jobs have already been cut from NPower within the last few months. I work for NPower. They have the nerve to say it is down to the merger not going ahead.

Congress, the consumer is paying twice for this failed business model. Not only are we paying for a rigged market that allows companies to fix prices but energy executives operating within a capital market where consumers need to keep the heat on in their homes and businesses and the lights need to be kept on. We have nowhere else to go.

Congress, it is very clear to the GMB that the regulator, Ofgem, has failed. Ofgem have continued to do a very poor job of regulating the energy market. Quite simply, Ofgem should be got rid of. The role of the regulator should be taken over by government and parliament, the scrutiny of the sector should be done in parliament, and the way the sector is organised and the way mergers and developments should be done is under democratic control. Congress, executives in the energy sector have been living life high on the hog paid for by us for decades. No wonder people are more and more cynical. Executives and top management need to be called to account

by the people. It is not just about shareholders. We applaud the Labour Party's approach to the sector at the last election. Now we need to ensure that the Labour Party adopts our policy on the energy sector as it prepares to form the next government. I move. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, John. Secunder? Is that formally, Northern? Formally. Thank you. If any other regions would like to follow Northern's example that would be very helpful. Does anybody wish to speak in opposition to these motions? No? In that case the CEC because Yorkshire Region has withdrawn 386, the CEC is supporting all these motions and I will take them as one group, Composite 17, Motions 385, 386, 387, Composite 18, Motions 390 and 391. All those in favour please show. Anyone against? They are all carried. Thank you.

Composite Motion 17 was CARRIED.

Motion 385 was CARRIED.

Motion 386 was WITHDRAWN.

Motion 387 was CARRIED.

Composite Motion 18 was CARRIED.

Motion 390 was CARRIED.

Motion 391 was CARRIED.

SOCIAL POLICY: TRANSPORT

THE PRESIDENT: We now move on to the Social Policy: Transport debate. This debate takes in Motions 401, 402, 403 and 404. We are running a little behind. I do appreciate that people have been keeping to good time and I would ask you to carry on doing that because I really don't want the SOC to come down and say that speeches have to be cut. Thank you for your co-operation on that. If you are speaking tomorrow, check your speeches tonight. Thank you. Is there a mover for Motion 401?

BUS DRIVERS BILL OF RIGHTS AND VISION ZERO MOTION 401

401. BUS DRIVERS BILL OF RIGHTS AND VISION ZERO

This Congress supports the Mayor of London's "Vision Zero" Programme to eliminate road deaths in London.

Action is needed as GMB analysis published in December 2018 on Transport for London (TfL) Bus Safety Data in the 12 month period between July 2017 and June 2018, discovered 6725 bus injury incidents (an average of over 18 per day), including 8 deaths and 719 serious injuries (an average of 2 per day).

Congress supports the Mayor of London's verdict that the quantity and frequency of deaths and injuries from London Bus Safety Incidents is indeed "chilling" for a public bus service that contracts out a quarter of the nation's buses which constitute around a half of the United Kingdom's bus journeys.

In 2018, it is estimated that public buses contracted by TfL were involved in 13% of all pedestrian deaths resulting from vehicle collisions. This is a matter of great concern considering these vehicles constitute only about 2% of the vehicles operating on London's roads.

For years, TfL bus contracts have prioritised timely performance and availability over safety, and as a result, London's bus operators have shown only decreasing safety performance over the years relative to its world city peers. This has to stop.

The safe operation of buses requires drivers rested and with a safe system of work and well-maintained vehicles, all items clearly spelled out in the London Bus Drivers' "Bill of Rights" which was presented to London City Hall by protesting TfL Bus Drivers on 14 September 2017.

The London Bus Drivers' "Bill of Rights" are as follows:

1. The right to a safe work schedule without any forced overtime or loss of pay;
2. The right to a decent and proper rest break in the working day;
3. The right to drive a safe and well-maintained vehicle;
4. The right to clean serviced toilets and rest facilities on all bus routes;
5. The right to report safety concerns without fear of retribution from TfL or employers;
6. The right, when seriously ill and covered by a doctor's note, to not be harassed into coming into work until fit to do so;
7. The right to relevant and timely safety training;
8. The right to drive without being forced to answer radio messages and texts from Controllers whilst in motion;
9. The right to have all company rules in writing and clearly displayed;
10. The right to be treated with dignity and respect by our employers, TfL and the public.

Congress calls for the following action:

- The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan to support the adoption of Bus Drivers "Bill of Rights" by TfL's bus contractors as part of his Vision Zero programme.
- TfL to revise existing bus contracts to include clear safety performance targets;
- GMB regions to campaign for all UK Bus Operators to adopt the principles contained in the Bus Drivers Bill of Rights;
- The CEC and regions to raise with local authorities the necessity of adopting the operational safety principles contained within the London Bus Drivers Bill of Rights for all local bus services;
- The CEC and regions to raise with local authorities the urgent requirement for information on bus safety performance be published and made available for public scrutiny.

HENDON BRANCH
London Region

(Referred)

LESLEY STANSFIELD (London): President and Congress, as a regular user of buses in the London Region, I have witnessed drivers as they tried to manage constant radio messages whilst driving, being on the receiving end of verbal abuse and showing compassion and consideration for those who have mobility problems. As an accompanying rep, I have witnessed drivers traumatised by physical attacks, pulled up by management on capability and sickness reviews. My members relate to me stories

of having to use their break time rushing to find working toilets, feeling unsafe on certain routes and having no support from management when requesting changes of shifts to accommodate caring for family members. Can we really allow these frontline service workers to be ignored?

Public transport is the oil which helps to keep the cogs of the public and private sectors turning. We run the risk of becoming a country of poorly run, poorly maintained and poorly staffed bus providers if we don't ensure that our drivers are protected from unscrupulous practices.

This motion lays out a bill of rights that we are asking Sadiq Khan to adopt, but we believe that this document should be adopted throughout the UK so that we have consistent protection for our drivers which goes hand-in-hand with safety for bus users. It ensures bus operators follow strict guidelines, putting drivers and their safety first and foremost and bring back the human touch by recognising staff are the important factor, not profits. I move. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Lesley. Brilliant. Seconder?

MAUREEN MALONE (London) : Congress, I second Motion 401 — Bus Drivers Bill of Rights and Vision Zero. It is difficult to believe that in the 21st century Transport for London has not afforded basic rights to its staff, of which many have serious health and safety implications. This, clearly, shows the lack of respect and dignity that Transport for London has for its employees, many of whom are GMB members. We would, therefore, like to call for the following action immediately: for the Mayor of London to actually support the Bill of Rights; for Transport for London to revise existing bus contracts which should include clear health and safety targets; and for the GMB regions to campaign for all UK bus operators to adopt the Bus Drivers Bill of Rights and to raise this within local authorities as an urgent issue. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Maureen. I call the mover of Motion 402.

BUS DRIVERS HOLDING PRIVATE HIRE LICENCES MOTION 402

402. BUS DRIVERS HOLDING PRIVATE HIRE LICENCES

This Congress notes that in light of the publicised increase in accidents involving buses in London, Transport for London (TfL) needs to consider if it is wise to issue Private Hire licences to full time bus drivers.

There is anecdotal evidence that indicates that some bus drivers are working part-time as Private Hire drivers and these drivers may start their shift at a bus garage, tired and in an unfit condition to safely drive a bus on London's roads. This contravenes working time regulations.

The above situation could be in reverse, whereby a Private Hire driver starts working as a London bus driver and does not relinquish their Private Hire licence.

We call on Congress to work with TfL and privatised bus companies to consolidate all driving licence databases so that this situation does not arise.

GMB PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS BRANCH

London Region

(Referred)

GORDON BRUNNING (London): Congress, I move Motion 402 — Bus Drivers Holding Private Hire Licences. I speak on behalf of our members working in the private drivers' hire section, who have raised genuine and important concerns about the growing and potentially dangerous practice of full-time bus drivers holding private hire licences. The practice for some drivers means that they are recklessly and needlessly moonlighting in the evenings and during weekends as private hire taxi drivers, and in some cases working in clear breach of the Working Time Regulations.

Evidence our members have obtained would suggest a 5,000 — yes, I said “5,000”! — increase between 2015 and 2018 of bus accidents, which would suggest that these accidents are increasing year on year. A great number of these bus accidents do not actually involve other cars or vehicles but, regrettably, involve the unnecessary injury or, tragically, the death of members of the public. Figures would suggest — again, these are high numbers — that there have been 719 serious injuries and eight fatalities within a 12-month period. This would suggest that some London bus drivers lack the appropriate training, which is another major concern of our members, or that these drivers are simply overworked and losing concentration whilst driving.

As a professional body, they call on this GMB Congress to actively work with senior members of TfL in developing a database in ensuring that TfL does not issue private hire taxi licences to an existing bus driver; to work with leading bus companies and local authorities to ensure that newly-recruited bus drivers do not hold existing private hire taxi licences or taxi private-hire licences with another local authority, and finally to lobby the HSE in obtaining new powers allowing them to clamp down on this dangerous and potentially life-threatening practice.

Your supporting this motion is not just important in terms of safeguarding our members' professional integrity but as the potential to save lives. Please support.
(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Gordon. Thank you. Secunder?

NATHAN CLARKE (London): Seconding Motion 402 — Bus Drivers Holding Private Hire Licences. President and Congress, this Congress notes that in 2016 a Freedom of Information request was submitted to Transport for London for the details on the number of individuals holding TfL-issued bus operator passes, who are also the holders of TfL-issued private hire licences. TfL's response was that they do not hold that information, they have no idea of the amount of people this involved and that they were not willing to manually extract the 109,000 private hire holder details to compare.

This Congress will also note that when another Freedom of Information request was submitted, the result stated that from statistics, there is an average of one injury or death every day involving London buses. This figure could have been much higher as only 6% of accidents involving a London bus results in an injury. There is no doubt in my mind that some of these accidents could be the result of tiredness or exhaustion.

Bus drivers in London have a major responsibility to the lives and safety of passengers and pedestrians, and anything that can be done to ensure that that safety is upheld is of paramount importance. Clearly, the result of the problem thus far in regards to this motion's point is unknown, which is why I call upon GMB to begin work with TfL and other bus companies to improve and consolidate licence-holder databases so that it can be further understood and our members and the greater public at large can be safer in their daily lives. Congress, thank you for listening. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Perfect, Nathan. Well done. I call the mover of Motion 403, please.

TAXI AND PHV BURDEN OF LEGAL COSTS MOTION 403

403. TAXI AND PHV DRIVERS BURDEN OF LEGAL COSTS

This Congress notes that our GMB members who are licensed as Taxi or PHV drivers, face having to take appeals against the removal or suspension of their license to a Magistrates Court, following their licensing Authority's decision on their case.

This means that there is an associated burden of legal costs, which in some cases may hinder access to justice, as well as tying up the courts time.

We call on the CEC to support a campaign to modernise and rationalise the process for appealing such decisions and eliminating the financial burden from our members.

MONMOUTH CC M13 BRANCH
Wales and South West Region

(Carried)

PAUL HUNT (GMB Wales & South West Region): President and Congress, currently if a taxi or private-hire driver is accused of breaking the terms of their licence, then they have to appear before a sub-committee of their local licensing authority. This will usually be made up of councillors to make the decision and ask questions, enforcement officers to present the case and a legal adviser to provide guidance. At this hearing a determination will be made as to whether the panel believes that the relevant legislation has been broken and, if so, a sanction may be imposed. This could be a suspension or, indeed, the removal of a person's licence to operate.

If the driver believes that this decision is unfair, then they have the right to appeal. So far, so good. Right? Wrong! Because this appeal, which the person's livelihood may depend upon, has to be made to a magistrates' court. This immediately means paying a fee to lodge the appeal, it also means that in most cases the driver faces a stark choice between representing themselves or hiring a solicitor. Given that the issue surrounding taxi licensing can be frustrating and complex, the prospect of representing themselves isn't just daunting, but in most cases it is simply not an option, especially if the stability of the family is on the line. That means hiring a solicitor at no small cost. It can cost a driver hundreds of pounds to challenge a licence suspension, so they face another stark choice: accept the suspension and be

unable to earn money, or pay a solicitor and hope that they get the decision overturned. They also have to hope that they don't end up paying more for the solicitor and lose the case, anyway. They must also hope that they don't have costs awarded against them if they do lose! I don't know about you, but I certainly would not want to be in that position. Essentially, it's gambling with your family's income.

Conversely, they can try and represent themselves and try to learn the intricacies of the relevant laws, ensuring that the right documentation is submitted to the right people at the right time, all the time working long hours, all the time knowing that the time spent on preparing the case they could be working or spending valuable time with their family. All of the time, they will know that the family depends on them getting this right. This is simply not a fair way to treat people trying to earn a living. Yes, authorities have to ensure that drivers are acting within the law; yes, they have to ensure public safety, but this should not be done at the expense of working people's access to justice. In these cases, the expenses can mount up quickly.

You only need to do a quick search to see how many firms of solicitors offer specialised representation. It appears to be a lucrative business and it is not surprising.

The authority need only determine that they believe the driver is a "fit and proper person". That's it. The term isn't defined. There is no definitive guide as to what it means. It can cost someone their livelihood to uphold the decision, and all of this while placing an unnecessary burden on our overstretched courts. It is time that the process of appealing the decision to refuse, removal or suspend licences is modernised and rationalised. It is time that hardworking drivers have free access to an appeals procedure fit for the 21st century, and it is time for the GMB to campaign on behalf of our professional driver members. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Paul. Secunder.

STEPHEN BRADY (GMB Wales & South West): Congress, I second Motion 403. Most people in this hall will have represented our members at disciplinary hearings. They don't always go our way. When they don't, we advise an appeal, which is a basic right under the ACAS guidelines. If that appeal is unsuccessful, then we consider an ET for a legal remedy. But that is only after the case has been independently reviewed, only after a fresh pair of eyes has looked again at the circumstances and assessed whether the correct processes have been followed. It's a fundamental part of our employment rights. So why should this be any different for self-employed professional drivers? Whilst they may not be directly employed, and enjoy the protections that that can offer, why should they not also have the chance of an independent appeal before having to go to court?

As it stands today, professional drivers have to pay for access to justice regarding licensing decisions. If they disagree with an authority's decision, they have no option but to apply to have the case heard by a magistrate. They have little or no option but to engage legal representation. They do not get the chance to put their case again, and they don't have the chance to challenge the decision without paying for the privilege to correct any mistakes that they may have made. The only persons to benefit from this are the lawyers, who make a pretty penny from hardworking people who don't

have the knowledge or experience to represent themselves in a court of law. People's livelihoods are on the line. This is unfair. It's just plain unfair. It is time that this outdated system was overhauled and the process made more accessible for all. If a lay person can make the initial licensing decision, then an independent person can review it, just as happens in workplaces across the country. It is time to stop this unfair practice and give professional drivers the access to justice that they deserve. I second. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I call the mover to Motion 404.

VEHICLES FOR USE AS LONDON TAXIS MOTION 404

404. VEHICLES FOR USE AS LONDON TAXIS

This Congress notes that a London taxi driver cannot buy a vehicle that has been previously registered as a taxi outside London. Taxi drivers currently only have one choice of electric vehicle that currently costs £60K.

Recently, proposals have been put forward by the Mayor of London to slash the age of older taxis from 15 years to 12 years, leaving cabbies virtually unable to sell their older taxis in order to upgrade to new electric ones.

Other makes of electric taxis are available, but they have not been allowed to compete in the London taxi market.

We call on Congress to work with Transport for London (TfL) to investigate why a certain make of taxi has a monopoly within the taxi trade and why a driver cannot buy an electric taxi that's previously been registered outside the London area.

GMB PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS BRANCH
London Region

(Referred)

DAVID REID (London): Congress, I am speaking on Motion 404 — Vehicles for use as London taxis. Whilst TfL considers the successor to the iconic black cab, we urge them to consider the long-suffering drivers. Whilst seeking, quite rightly, to improve air quality in London, it is unfair that the financial burden has fallen on the cabbies. As each model of cab has been superseded, the previous model has, effectively, been rendered obsolete and labelled as a pollutant, dropping thousands of pounds from its value. We urge the London Mayor and Transport for London to properly consult with the drivers on a choice of suitable electrical cab, upholding standards and particular on disabled access that the black cab is renowned for.

This is not unique to London as local licensing authorities seek to improve local environments. Often licensing officers decide on vehicle specifications, without any reference or understanding of the drivers and often in relation to passengers' needs as well. Clearly, the huge investment needed for such vehicles and the competition for distributors, means that companies such as Uber and Addison Lee, are keen to put cheap prices for consumers ahead of the needs of those who are providing this valuable service. Cheapness may divert people from our vital public transport system. Cheap drives attract consumers to private hire where the drivers, as we know from our Union's stellar work on Uber and Addison Lee, have seen wins

against those same companies who are putting their shareholders before their drivers as they race to the bottom rates and stop taxi drivers, chauffeurs and small operators from creating real income and workers due to basement rates. We must see an equilibrium return.

We urge the London Mayor and the authorities UK-wide to properly fund a scrappage scheme so that the environment is protected and the taxi drivers are not unfairly penalised. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dave. Secunder? *(The motion was formally seconded from the floor)* Thank you, London. In that case, does anyone wish to oppose any of the motions in this debate? *(No response)* In that case, I ask Viv Smart to respond on behalf of the CEC.

VIV SMART (CEC, Public Services): Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC on Motions 401, 402 and 404. On Motion 401 — Bus Drivers Bill of Rights and Vision Zero — the CEC is asking for this motion to be referred. The calls in this motion for bus contract revisions to include safety targets and for a national reporting regime are covered by existing policy that was recently debated by Congress, namely, Motion 308, Bus Collisions — at Congress 2018.

The part of the motion not covered by existing policy is its call for GMB to adopt and promote the London Bus Drivers Bill of Rights. This document was drawn up by Unite the Union, but our members in bus services have not had an opportunity to for consultation on its composition. We ask that the issue be referred to allow us to investigate whether a GMB charter for bus service workers should be drawn up.

On Motion 402 — Bus Drivers Holding Private Hire Licences — the CEC is asking for this motion to be referred as the motion says that the extent of this problem is currently unknown. Nevertheless, any cause of fatigue poses a threat to the safety of passengers and other road users. Our reason for seeking a referral is that the motion calls for a specific action for GMB to work with TfL to consolidate its licensing databases. We feel that London and Southern Regions would be best placed to lead on this work.

On Motion 404 — Vehicles for Use as London Taxis — the CEC is asking for this motion to be referred. The CEC is sympathetic to this motion. Taxi drivers should be able to reduce purchase costs as long as the vehicle is compliant with reasonable environmental and accessibility standards. The reason for seeking a referral is that the motion calls for a specific action for GMB to engage with TfL on this question. We feel that London and Southern Regions will be best placed to lead on this work.

Therefore, Congress, to reiterate, the CEC is asking for Motions 401, 402 and 404 to be referred. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Viv. Does London Region accept the reference back on Motion 401 *(Agreed)* Does London Region also accept the reference back on Motion 402? *(Agreed)* Finally, does London Region accept the reference back on Motion 404? *(Agreed)*

In that case, I can put them all to the vote in one batch. Motions 401, 402, 403 and 404, all those in favour, please show? Any against. They are all carried. Thank you.

Motion 401 was REFERRED.

Motion 402 was REFERRED.

Motion 403 was CARRIED.

Motion 404 was REFERRED.

EMPLOYMENT POLICY: PENSIONS

THE PRESIDENT: I call Motion 162. Could the mover and seconder of Motion 162 in the Employment Policy: Pensions debate please make their way to the front? Thank you.

NPC FUNDING MOTION 162

162. NPC FUNDING

This Congress calls on the Union to agree to donate 5 pence per member each year in addition to the affiliation fee that the GMB pays the NPC (National Pensioners Convention).

The NPC campaigns for a better quality of life for Britain's pensioners. Pensioners are workers that have retired mainly with a working class background. They are fighting for not only those that have retired but for those in work.

Without financial support the NPC cannot achieve what the late Jack Jones set out to do.

MILTON KEYNES CITY BRANCH
London Region

(Referred)

ALLAN THOMPSON (London): Congress, I move Motion 162 — NPC Funding. The National Pensions Convention represents around one million members in over one thousand different organisations across the UK promoting the welfare interests of all pensioners as a way of securing dignity, respect and financial security in retirement. It was the NPC that campaigned for the free concessionary bus pass and the introduction of the winter fuel allowance. Achievements such as those not only benefit my relatives and friends who are retired but they set the standard for younger generations, a platform for us to build our own campaigns on the issues that will face us in our future retirement.

However, as with any campaigning organisation, it is essential that the NPC has enough funds to allow it to keep moving forward. This is especially difficult when many of your supporters are no longer in work and are often only in receipt of a basic state pension. This is why it is so important that we recognise our shared responsibility for older people. The NPC does, of course, welcome more support in their campaigns, but we must also ensure that this important organisation and its absolutely essential work is not threatened by a lack of funding.

The region acknowledges that the motion is quite prescriptive in how this is to be achieved, so we accept the referral, which we recognise is the spirit of the motion, seeking to establish a secure future for the NPC. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder?

JAN SMITH (London): Congress, I second Motion 162 — NPC Funding. I am pleased to second this motion because the NPC does a lot of valuable work. They work for everybody. Let me say, in seconding this motion, that they are also in working correspondence with our Retired National Office. Whatever policies they have or any information that they receive they ensure it is passed on to the GMB, who, as national co-ordinator, makes sure that everybody on the National Committee receives that information. They do some valuable work and undertake valuable campaigns which we have supported. So, please, support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jan. Does anybody wish to oppose that motion? (*No response*) In that case, I will ask John McDonnell to respond for the CEC just to explain why we are asking it to be referred.

JOHN McDONNELL (CEC, Manufacturing Section): Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC on the motion on NPC Funding, which we are asking to be referred. The National Pensioners Convention, the NPC, is the principal organisation representing pensioners in the United Kingdom. It is made up of around 1,000 bodies, representing 1,500,000 members, organised into federal and regional units. The NPC was founded by the former Transport & General Workers' leader, Jack Jones. It seeks to promote the welfare and interest of all pensioners like me, and aims to secure dignity, respect and financial security in retirement and has mounted campaigns around a decent pension, universal benefits, a national care service, accessible transport, ending fuel poverty and unifying the generations.

There are two words in that definition — dignity and respect. I think somebody should tell the BBC what those words mean, because they have taken away pension TV licences. (*Cheers and applause*) Last week, what were they doing? They were fating pensioners as wonderful heroes, men and women who fought in the Second World War. Yet this week, they said “We’re going to take your TV licence off you”. It’s disgraceful. (*Applause*)

I was born in 1933. I was seven when the war started. I was 14 when the war finished. At 18 I went into the Army, and in 1956 I was called up in the Suez Crisis and sent to Egypt. I have earned that free licence! I’ve earned it. (*Applause and cheers*) I am saying from *this* rostrum that I will not be paying that £150 because I have earned it. It’s mine! Thank you. (*A standing ovation amidst cheers*)

THE PRESIDENT: Brilliant, John. Thank you. I am not sure if he did say what he was meant to say, but he was asking me to ask London Region to refer Motion 162. Do you agree to the reference back? (*Agreed*) In that case, all those in favour, please show? Any against? Thank you.

Motion 162 was REFERRED.

RETIRED MEMBERS ASSOCIATION

THE PRESIDENT: I now call on Jan Smith from the Retired Members' Association to address Congress.

JAN SMITH (National Secretary, GMB Retired Members' Association, London): Congress, delegates, President and General Secretary, the Retired Members' Association is known as the RMA. I am pleased to say that our report is now back on the agenda. Tim, I thank you for taking my comments and criticisms back that I put in my report last year, and you promised that you would put it back on the agenda. Thank you for that and for taking note.

Let me say, in relation to the RMA last year, it was touch and go as to whether we would have a national conference. After much debate it was decided on a trial period to hold the conference at Mary Turner House. What a most appropriate place in which to hold that conference, because I am sure that Mary was watching us making sure that we were doing what was right.

It was such a success that everybody was commenting on how it went and the venue. It went so well that I am pleased to announce that we will be holding a conference again this year on 1st and 2nd October, again back at Mary Turner House. (*Applause*)

At our Conference last year we had speakers, and those speakers were our General Secretary, Tim; our National President, Barbara, and Neil Duncan-Jordan from the NPC. They all spoke extremely well and spoke up for the RMA. At this year's Conference, so far the speakers confirmed to attend are, again, the General Secretary, our President, Barbara, and our National Pensions Officer, who should have been with us last year but unfortunately he became double booked. So may we have a successful Conference again this year.

Going on to our finances, which is important to mention, we are financed by contributions given by branches who are affiliated. That means that, in the past few years, our finances have gone down. For that reason, it is because of losses, closure of branches or the amalgamation of branches. With those amalgamated branches, which might have grown in number, it means that we still don't get any more extra money. As a result, we were in a bit of a crisis, which is one of the reasons as to whether we could have held the RMA Conference last year. However, on behalf of the Committee and the RMA, I give thanks to the national finance department which funded our NPC payment. Thank you very much.

I will go on to say that since our information has been in the yearly GMB diaries, I am getting constant enquiries, which is good for the GMB, as to how do members become retired members and is there anything that they can do. They don't only come from the London Region, where I come from, but they come from all regions. I have had enquiries from the Midland & East Coast Region, GMB Wales.... You name it, I've had them. What I do is send them to my London Region department who pass that information on to the appropriate officers within the appropriate regions. So not only am I the Secretary, but I am assisting in retaining members for the GMB.

Going on to the TV campaign, we did take part in the NPC TV campaign. Many people from all regions turned up for that. I am sure we will be doing the same again as a result of the announcement yesterday.

But I have some more bad news, which I only heard a few minutes ago. This is from the DWP this time, whereby they are now going to raise the age, up to 66, from the year 2037 to 2039 instead of the year 2044. This, colleagues, is going to affect many of you who are in this room. That goes for those who are in the ages of 39 to 47 now. So I am sure we will be looking to campaign against that. In the meantime, contact your MPs. It may not do a lot of good but plague them with our comments and criticisms.

Can I give thanks to all regions which have donated raffle prizes for our stall, because that stall is one of the areas from where we get finance. We fully appreciate the prizes that have been donated, but not only from regions but also from individuals who have brought along prizes for our cause.

Let me also thank our National Committee. We have our moments but we all, at the end of the day, work well together. This we will continue to do. I will also give thanks to Steve Kemp, our national co-ordinator, and Pat Gannon, especially, for the back-up work that she does on our behalf. May I, on behalf of myself, because I am also Secretary to the London Region RMA, give thanks to Warren Kenny, my regional secretary, for all the work and support that he gives to our committee. Warren, it is truly appreciated. *(Applause)*

I have one little quote regarding Motion 36, where I challenged the SOC on Sunday morning and it was lost. Those goalposts keep being moved, but I say thank you to the CEC because I will be back, and you have now given me the rule that I need to put the next motion into. Look at. Watch this space.

Lastly but not least, in 2017 I announced that we were going to make Monica Smith our Honorary President. Congress, this was duly done and Monica was presented with a silver engraved certificate, thanking her for all the work which she has done on behalf of the RMA for which she was duly made Honorary President. It is lovely to see you here today, Monica, and this week. I hope you don't mind me saying it, but Monica is suffering from not very good health. We wish you well and good luck for the future. We all love you dearly. *(Applause)*

Finally, may I give thanks to my husband, Colin, who sits at the back — he is now covering his face up. I can see you — for all the support that you have given me in the 35 years of our marriage, and for spending your honeymoon at a GMB congress. *(Laughter)* During those years, you have still given me support. You might get angry some times, but I love you lots. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jan, for that report. It was a pleasure to come to your conference. I look forward to coming to the next one.

Just before we have some regional success stories, let me call Motions 178, 182, 183 and 198 to come to the front. Then we will be ready to start.

REGIONAL SUCCESS STORIES

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, we will now move on to the second series of our Regional Success Stories, celebrating the work of London Region, Birmingham Region and GMB Scotland since our last Congress. Delegates are warned that the following videos contain flashing images and flash photography. *(Videos played)*
(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: That was brilliant by all three regions. It is great to watch those sort of videos because they are really uplifting. It means we want to go back and carry on the fight in our workplaces. Thank you. Back to business. I call Motion 178. I call the mover.

EMPLOYMENT POLICY: RIGHTS AT WORK

EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL SERVICES WEBSITE MOTION 178

178. EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL SERVICE WEBSITE

This Congress calls on the GMB at its supported MPs to raise the issue and campaign for claimant names to be retracted from the Employment Tribunal Service website that was introduced by this Government.

NOTTINGHAM TEC BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

PHILIP HARRIS (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I move Motion 178 — Employment Tribunal Services Website. This Congress calls on the GMB and its supported MPs to raise the issue and campaign for claimant names to be retracted from the Employment Tribunal Service website that was introduced by this Government. Transparency is a word liked and used by employers on a regular basis for their own ends, which they are now abusing.

Blacklisting is a word that should, and does strike, the fear of God into employers. Blacklisting and discrimination cases are still on the increase, a travesty in itself, but now something more sinister is happening, a process that can only be described as “backdoor blacklisting”.

Backdoor blacklisting was discovered by one of our own solicitors whilst representing a member. Unscrupulous companies are searching the Tribunal website for a member’s name to find out if they have had a successful case against a previous employer, and they are making their decisions based on that information to the detriment of the employee. Employees have had jobs retracted because of this. This is a fact. Proving this is blacklisting is hard and time consuming and costly, not to mention the stress to the member involved.

We, as reps, and our members need to arm ourselves with all of the protection available to us against employers and, ultimately, this morally corrupt Government that endorses this perverse unethical practice, the practice of backdoor blacklisting.

Blacklisting destroyed workers and families in the past. Let's stop it happening again. This motion must be supported. If not, every one of our members who submits a claim must be appalled that this threat hangs over them. That's why I implore you to support Motion 178. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Philip. Secunder?

ALBERT LE BLANC (Midland & East Coast): I second Motion 178 — Employment Tribunal Services Website. I am asking Congress, please, to support this motion. How can we allow employers to use this kind of blacklisting? Our members should be protected from this unethical code of practice, blackdoor blacklisting. Our members should be given the tools to help fight this kind of behaviour by our employers. Again, comrades, this is why we need a Labour government back in power to protect the rights of our workers and not the bosses. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Albert. I call the mover of Motion 182.

QUASHING OF EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL FEES MOTION 182

182. QUASHING OF EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL FEES

This Congress notes that the Supreme Court quashed the Government's system of fees for employment tribunals. It is acknowledged that this case was taken up by a Union who successfully argued that the fees, which can be as high as £1,200 prevented workers from enforcing their employment rights. In essence, the Supreme Court have ruled that fees for bringing tribunal fees was unlawful which means that the Government will have to repay up to £32million to claimants.

The fees were introduced in 2013 on the basis that it would cut the number of malicious and weak cases. However, the introduction of the fees prevented workers accessing justice.

The Government have said that it would take steps to refund payments but have not done so.

We call upon Congress to:-

1. Set up a strategy/plan to ensure that all members who paid fees are refunded and attempt to review cases particularly those with discrimination elements to ensure that justice has been done by looking at avenues of redress such as Judicial Review in line with Unionline.
2. Pilot an all member survey to find out how many members felt discriminated against were put off lodging a claim due to the extortionate fees.
3. Work with Unionline to find out how many cases with discrimination elements were unable to proceed due to the fees requirement.
4. Explore the human impact of this ruling of those who were unable to proceed with their case since 2013, and what difference it would have made had they done so.
5. Explore any other steps that may include redress for those who were put off because of the fees requirement which has now been ruled unlawful.

EALING GMB BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

MARY GOODSON (London): Congress, I move Motion 182 on the Quashing of Employment Tribunal Fees. President, in an attempt to deny access to justice for our members and all our workers, the Tory/Lib-Dem Government brought in legislation to reduce the number of claims going to court. Their feeble justification was that far too many non-meritorious cases were ending up in the system. So on 28th July 2013, and for the first time in our history, a fee-charging scheme for employment tribunals and the employment appeal tribunal was introduced. Our sister union, UNISON, mounted a legal challenge and almost four years to the day, from the introduction of fees, on 26th July 2017, the Supreme Court handed down its judgment.

The Supreme Court held that introducing the charging of fees into the employment tribunal system was unlawful under both domestic and EU law, as it prevents access to justice and makes it difficult for employees to enforce employment rights. They pointed to the substantial and sustained fall in claims. As proof of this, they also found the fees to be indirectly discriminatory primarily because a greater proportion of women than men bring more expensive type-B claims, including claims of sex discrimination. The fees were scrapped with immediate effect.

On 20th October 2017 the Government announced the details of the Employment Tribunals' Refund Scheme, but what did we, the GMB, do about it? Apparently, all fees owing to the GMB have been paid as we loaned members the money to pay for the fees. Also, apparently, no member who sought advice of UnionLine was put off pursuing a claim as they had advice from UnionLine. This is all very commendable and admirable, but I ask you: does this go far enough? Are we 100% sure that every member who has had a claim went to UnionLine? I am certainly not.

The motion asks Congress to support five points, every one relevant, all reasonable and all fair. If I am being honest, it is what we should know or must do as a caring trade union that is prepared to fight injustice at all levels. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder?

PAUL BLOCK (London): I second Motion 182 on the Quashing of Employment Tribunal Fees. President and Congress, Mary has covered the background to this motion. The CEC has asked us to withdraw this motion that would give access to justice without examining and understanding the human impact and seeking redress of those who are put off having their claims assessed. I ask you: how many members knew we would loan the money to pay for the fees? Very few, I would suggest. Colleagues, neither is it good enough for the CEC to make swooping statements as they have done in their response.

In seeking withdrawal of the motion and opposing it, it is just not acceptable. Let's have a bit of transparency here. Let's see how many more cases there are out *there* and let's see how many more of our members have not been given access to justice. Congress, let's get on with the job. If that job means a bit of extra work for our legal director at UnionLine, and our regional legal departments, and they have the capacity to carry it out — they haven't said that they don't — I ask you, what's wrong with that? We are told that we are the GMB, and we are. We campaign, we organise, we

bargain and we will leave no stone unturned. In that case, do not leave our members under those stones. Instead, we should do everything possible and help our members to turn those stones over.

Finally, Congress, I will leave you with this thought. When this motion goes to the vote, please put your hands up high in support of this motion. Oppose the CEC and let's have justice once and for all. Because if you don't and a member comes to you and asking you, "What did you do?", will you be able to look them in the eye in the full knowledge that you had the opportunity to make a difference. Please support Motion 182 and oppose the CEC. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. I call the mover of Motion 183.

WORKER PROTECTION DURING TAKEOVERS MOTION 183

183. WORKER PROTECTION DURING TAKEOVERS

This Congress is extremely concerned about the practice that is widespread in business, that during the period prior to a company either being sold or placed into receivership, or even just in the possibility of one of these events happening, there is the removing unfairly of a high amount of assets from the business by various means. This is just the result of greed to milk the business of assets and can therefore make sure that a business that is struggling will go bankrupt affecting the entire number of employees apart from very senior management and shareholders, completely removing any liability by the holding company. Congress therefore instructs that the CEC mounts a campaign with other interested parties to get the Government to make this practice illegal.

W50 WELLINGTON BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(*Referred*)

MARTIN COOPER (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I'm a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. (*Applause*) I am moving Motion 183 — Worker Protection During Takeovers.

Congress, if a company business is struggling and there is a very good possibility that it may even be wound up through a formal insolvency procedure, or is going to be sold on and carry on with their business as normal, then there are rules and regulations that should be followed. It is for creditors to recover money owed or sometimes a business may be turned around with the help of an administrator or a new company in a takeover. During the period prior to being sold or placed into receivership, there are some unscrupulous owners and senior-ranking company management who take this opportunity to strip the assets and milk the coffers to deliberately force bankruptcy. It is a way of removing liability of the folding company and filtering cash and goods that affects the entire workforce. This may occur even if there is a possibility of a sale or receivership, even if it further plunges the company into despair and financial burden.

Recently, some high-profile cases, such as Carillion and BHS, have shown up these charlatans for what they are. So we are asking for the Government to make this practice illegal. Instead of feathering their own nests, they should look, firstly, after

the workforce as a priority and, secondly, their creditors. Rules have been enforced concerning pensions, so we are demanding similar legalisation to stop this practice and tighten up a loophole. Please support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Martin. Seconder?

WARINDER JUSS (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I speak to second Motion 183. In his brilliant and inspiring speech during the morning session, our General Secretary, Tim, mentioned Carillion, but Carillion is just one of those companies where a company collapses but the bosses are able to take their millions leaving ordinary workers without a job, their families in financial despair and also affecting other organisations who rely on these companies for their services along the supply chain.

Alison Phillips, yesterday, the editor of *The Mirror*, mentioned the ever-increasing greed in the board room, and it appears that this greed does not stop when a company gets into financial difficulties.

Congress, Sir Philip Green bought BHS back in 2000 for £200 million. Fifteen years later he sold it for just £1. BHS have debts of £1.3 billion, including a pensions deficit of £571 million, but he and his family, over that 15-year period of ownership, were able to collect £586 million in dividends, rental payments and interest-only loans. It just cannot be right that somebody like Philip Green can extract hundreds of millions of pounds from a business and walk away to his tax haven leaving the Pension Protection Scheme to pick up the bill and 11,000 employees without their jobs and pensions. We must definitely stop that from happening again. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Warren. Thank you. I call the mover of Motion 184.

“HOLDER OF THE TUPE” MOTION 184

184. “HOLDER OF THE TUPE”

This Congress is aware that every branch of the GMB are involved in TUPE transfers for many staff ranging from school staff, cleaners, cooks to the outsourcing of public services.

What we have found as time goes on is the original TUPE documents and due diligence such as contracts and terms and conditions are conveniently “misaid” or “lost”, or changes have been made in “agreements with the Unions” that we have no knowledge of, or are able to check on.

This Congress would like to propose the creation of a “Holder of the TUPE” where relevant documents at time of transfer would have to be lodged and could be referred to should there be any problems further down the line – or any changes made should be updated.

HAVERING BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

GORDON BRUNNING (London): Congress, I am moving Motion 184 — “Holder of the TUPE”. Many of you here today will either be aware of or have been involved in the TUPE process as individuals, as a collective or as activists. I am sure we will all have found that, conveniently, employers have mislaid or lost the original TUPE documentation or changed the name in so-called “agreements” that are not recorded and without the means to check the validity of these claims as employees or activists, something that is unacceptable and demonstrates a clear failure of due diligence on the part of employers.

We call on this Congress to lobby all leading political parties, demanding the creation of a “Holder of the TUPE”, where all relevant documents at the time of transfer would be lodged, stored and, therefore, should the need arise, which it most often does, in the future to be referred to and changes or updates checked. In supporting this motion you will be sending a clear message to employers. Due diligence must be taken seriously and not just mislaid or lost when it suits them to disadvantage employees. Thank you. Please support the motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gordon. Secunder?

TONY CHOLERTON (London): I second Motion 184 — “Holder of the TUPE”. President and Congress, Congress believes in the protection of workers’ rights, terms and conditions. Yet employers regularly use TUPE regulations to get around the terms and conditions that we have fought long and hard to secure. At the time of transfer from one employer to another, our rights are protected by TUPE, but this time is the easiest time to muddy the water and conveniently omit or change terms and conditions so that we are made more vulnerable.

It is for this reason that many employers transfer workers so that they don’t have to deal with them directly, only to take them back in house a few years later with their terms and conditions in tatters. When people are transferred, there is a duty on the old employer to provide certain information to the new employer, but there is no legal requirement for this information to be given to the trade unions dealing with the transfer.

This motion calls for a new “Holder of the TUPE” where all the information shared between the old and the new employer should be kept securely by all parties concerned so that in the future, if there is a dispute, the information can be easily accessed. This would stop the erosion of our terms and conditions and stop the underhand way the unscrupulous employers use TUPE to treat us badly. Please support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tony. I call the mover of Motion 198.

RIGHT TO PAID HOLIDAYS TO BE ENFORCED BY HMRC MOTION 198

198. RIGHT TO PAID HOLIDAYS TO BE ENFORCED BY HMRC

GMB calls on the government to ensure the right to paid holidays is enforced by HMRC. Employers are consistently failing to pay holiday pay or the correct holiday pay. Paid holiday is a health and safety provision and a failure to afford workers paid holidays creates unnecessary risks.

(Carried)

OLIVER CRUICKSHANK (Southern): Congress and Madam President: Right to paid holidays to be enforced by HMRC. We call on the Government to ensure that the rights to paid holidays are enforced by HMRC. Employers are constantly failing to pay for holidays or the correct holiday pay. Some companies are paying zero hour contracts and the employees don't even get holidays, let alone holiday pay. They can't afford even to have a holiday or they would end up losing their homes.

Some big companies have made so many cuts that they now don't have enough staff to cover holidays, meaning that staff will go without holidays due to the lack of staff within their workplace. For example, I work at Asda. Asda have cut so many staff during the last few years that they struggle to cover every holiday, meaning that staff miss out. Now, under their new contracts, Contract 6, which we will get on to later, they are going to lose even more. Paid holidays is a health and safety provision, and the failure to afford workers paid holidays is a major risk to health. It is time for all employers to listen. If not, as Tim was saying earlier in his speech, we will bring the fight to them. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Brilliant, Oliver. Thank you. Secunder?

VICTORIA UGEWOEME (Southern): First-time delegate, first-time speaker. *(Applause)* I second the motion: Right to Paid Holidays to be Enforced by HMRC.

The GMB calls on the Government to ensure the right to paid holidays is enforced by HMRC. The GMB is to ensure a situation whereby any category of employer who fails to pay workers the correct holiday pay by only paying the basic pay and failing to account for elements such as overtime, commission and other elements normally received by the worker will be held accountable. There are way how an employers dresses up a failure to pay holiday pay. The fact remains that exploitation is exploitation. Paid holiday at its core is a health and safety provision and a failure to afford workers paid holidays or paid the correct holiday pay creates unnecessary risk. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Victoria. Brilliant! Does anybody wish to speak against any of these motions? *(No response)* No. Then I will call Colin Gunter to speak on behalf of the CEC.

COLIN GUNTER (CEC, Manufacturing Section): President and Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC on Motions 178, 182, 183 and 184.

On Motion 178 — Employment Tribunal Services Website — the CEC is asking for this motion to be withdrawn. We are assuming that the motion is calling for the names to be redacted on the ground of privacy for the claimant, but it does not explicitly state this. Therefore, the CEC cannot form a full reason as to why this motion is calling for this. Whilst we appreciate that the claimants might want to remain anonymous or keep their details confidential when details of their cases are

published, we fear that employers would exert the same argument not to have their details published either.

The reason for introducing this way of publishing cases was for greater transparency in employment tribunal cases, which GMB fully supports, as it gives greater exposure to bad employers. We would not want employers to have that ability on the ground that the motion does not go far enough to put in an alternative suggestion to the current system, so we are asking for it to be withdrawn.

On Motion 182 — Quashing of Employment Tribunal Fees — the CEC is asking for this motion to be withdrawn. GMB opposed the introduction of fees in 2013. We opposed them and continue to oppose them but they have never deterred GMB from taking on our members' cases, nor taking on those high-profile cases, such as Uber.

I shall respond to each point raised in the motions to make clear our position. (1) All fees owing to GMB either have been recovered or are being recovered. GMB loaned members money to pay the fees so our members were not in the same position as non-union members. (2) No member of GMB who sought advice in their claim via UnionLine would have been put off pursuing their claim because of the fees regime as they had the best advice from our fully-owned law firm on prospects of success. GMB loaned the fees money to members so that they would not be out of pocket. (3) All claims with reasonable prospects, as determined by our own law firm, would have proceeded so that no case would ever fall into this category. The fees regime did not deter our lawyers from actively pursuing discriminate claims or any other type of litigation. (4) With respect to the motion, the motion does not explain or explicitly say what a human impact assessment is or what scope of this exploration it should be. (5) Whilst this may have been an issue for members of the public who have not joined the GMB, for our members, claims were issued irrespective of the fees regime.

On Motion 183 — Worker Protection During Takeovers — the CEC is asking for this motion to be referred. In 2018 the Government put forward proposals that would impose on company directors with a greater liability when asset stripping. We have seen British Home Stores and Carillion fall victim to this corruption and eventually collapsing.

The recommendation is to refer for further research on the means by which, effectively, it addresses issues.

On Motion 184 — “Holder of the TUPE” — the CEC is asking for this motion to be supported with a qualification. GMB has long argued that the employee liability information that the old employer is required to provide to the new employer in a TUPE transfer should also be given to the union. How this information would then be retained would be a matter for the branch and region to determine, taking into account matters such as GDPR. The recommendation is to support with this minor qualification. Therefore, Congress, we are asking for Motions 178 and 182 to be withdrawn; for Motion 183 to be referred and for Motion 184 to be supported with a qualification. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Midland & East Coast, do you agree to withdraw your Motion 178? (*Declined*) Okay. In that case, the CEC will be opposing it.

London Region, I heard a “No”. In that case, the CEC will be opposing. (*This was referring to Motion 182*)

Birmingham & West Midlands, do you agree for the reference back? (*Agreed*) Thank you. (*This was referring to Motion 183*)

Motion 184, does London Region support the qualification? (*Confirmed*) Yes. Thank you.

In that case, I will take 178, the CEC is opposing this motion, but all those in favour of the motion, please show? All those against? That motion is carried. (*Cheers*)

Motion 178 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Here we go again. Motion 182, the CEC is opposing. Would all those in favour of Motion 182, please show? Keep your hands up really high. All those against? I think that is carried. (*Cheers and applause*)

Motion 182 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: On Motion 183, the CEC is asking for reference back. The region has agreed. All those in favour, please show? Those against? That is carried.

Motion 183 was REFERRED.

THE PRESIDENT: Next is Motion 184. London Region has agreed the qualification. All those in favour, please show? All those against? That is carried.

Motion 184 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: On Motion 198, the TUC is supporting. All those in favour, please show? All those against? That’s carried.

Motion 198 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Can movers and seconders for Motions 105, 109, 114, 115, 116 and 117? Let me say that Motion 105 has been withdrawn. So it’s Motions 105, 109, 114, 116 and 117.

**UNION ORGANISATION: EQUALITY AND INCLUSION
MEN’S HEALTH CONFERENCE
MOTION 105**

105. MEN’S HEALTH CONFERENCE

This Congress “Boys don’t cry”, “Be a big boy”, “Man Up”, “Be a man” are all common phrases we have all heard or actually said.

Over three quarters of all suicides are men, men are three times likely to become alcoholics than women, three times likely to report frequent drug use than women, 34% of men are too embarrassed to talk about mental health issues and the list continues.

This motion asks that Regional and National Conferences are held yearly to tackle these issues that clearly effect men and that openness and good practice can be used to resolve these problems throughout our Union.

L16 GREENWICH BRANCH
Southern Region

(Referred)

STEVE OAKES (Southern): Congress, I move Motion 105 — Men's Health Conference. Common phrases that we have all heard are "Be a man", "Suck it up, son", "Grow a pair", "Man up" and "Boys will be boys". Yes, boys will be boys because boys perform less than girls in all stages of education.

"Be a man", because men are three times more likely to become alcohol dependent.. "Grow a Pair", because 86% of all violent crime is committed by men. "Suck it up, son", because two-thirds of all drug-related deaths occur in men. Finally, "Man up", because 76% of all suicides are by men. Congress, it's time to stop manning up and it's time to start opening up! *(Applause)* What's happening is that some men fail to recognise and act on warning signs and are unable or unwilling to seek help. This motion asks for a national and regional conferences to address men's health.

Congress, the time to man up is over! The time to self medicate is over! The time to die prematurely is over! It's time to act and that is now! Thank you. *(Applause)* Thank you. Do I have a seconder?

JAMIE DENNIS (Southern): Congress, I second Motion 105. Mental health among men is a serious issue, one that often goes under the radar as many men, especially those working in male-dominated environments, are too embarrassed or afraid to speak out. I once counted myself among that number. Around seven years ago I was going through a particularly tough time at home and, as a result, I started to suffer with depression. I felt at the time that I couldn't speak to anyone about it. I was embarrassed to discuss it with my colleagues, family and friends. So I suffered in silence. As a result, my work standards started to slip, I became withdrawn and I started not to care and lost any pride in my work. Some of my colleagues started to notice and asked if I was okay. I couldn't admit that I had a problem. I was supposed to be a tough ex-serviceman, a fabricator/welder. We don't suffer with mental health issues and we certainly don't talk about it. But we do and we should feel comfortable to talk about these things.

I did not, and as a result things got worse for me and as I spiralled down into depression I, ultimately, lost my job. Had I the confidence and courage to talk about my issues at the time, I could have got help and I could have felt less isolated. Regional and national conferences would provide an opportunity to raise awareness for those suffering in silence with mental health issues as well as more physical health issues. Mental health amongst men should not carry a stigma. For this reason, among many others, I second. *(Applause)*

JUNE MINNERY (In the Chair): Can I have the mover of Motion 109?

GMB STRUCTURE MOTION 109

109. GMB STRUCTURE

This Congress is asking GMB to encourage both Irish & BAME members to become active members in the Branch Committee to ensure a reflection of societal diversity in all branches. This is a vital part of working towards prevention of negative stereotypes becoming prejudices, which in turn leads to discrimination and oppression.

It is important to ensure all members- including those of Irish decent are recognised as persons who can suffer from discrimination and GMB work to mitigate against such discrimination.

We also request GMB directs that all Branches actively work to include people from all minority groups within their Branch Structure. This motion is to promote change and enable good practice in all branches, workplaces and the community we live and to promote the GMB Equality Ethos.

Finally, we call on GMB to provide all branch statistics on the membership composition as this will be an important part of encouraging growth of minorities within the branch and will allow the Branch to target and encourage membership within groups where membership does not reflect office diversity.

L26 LB WANDSWORTH BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

VICTORIA MAHER (Southern): I'm a first-time delegate and a second-time speaker *(Applause)* moving Motion 109. Congress, I put it to you to support our motion that more encouragement should be given to those from the BAME communities, including those from Irish, eastern European and other backgrounds. Coming from an Irish father and Scottish mother, being second generation and proud Celt, my father arrived here back in the 1960s and was immediately met with discrimination. There were jobs, no accommodation and no benefits. On every lamp post, shop window and some front-room windows were the slogans "No Blacks, No Dogs, No Irish".

Following on from the former GMB slogan, "More Blacks, More Dogs and More Irish", I believe that GMB should ensure that this is reflected throughout all of the branch structures. We should work towards the prevention of negative stereotypes becoming unconscious bias, which many of us know can lead to a lifetime of discrimination and oppression. It is vital that in 2019 we are all represented fairly, whether we are white, black, Irish, Polish or green with purple dots.

It is important to ensure that all members, including those of Irish, eastern European and other descents are recognised as persons who can suffer from discrimination, and for GMB to work to mitigate such discrimination.

As a first-time delegate, I request that GMB actively works to include people from all minorities within the branch structure. I believe that this motion will promote change and enable good practice. We request that all data be updated to enable branches to support the GMB ethos.

Finally, I call on GMB to provide all branch statistics on membership composition as this will be an important part of encouraging growth of minorities, especially within the structure. This will then allow GMB to target and encourage membership within groups where membership does not affect diversity. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Is there a seconder for the motion?

VICTORIA UGEWOEME (Southern): President, Chair, Congress and visitors, first-time delegate, second-time speaker. (*Applause*) I second the motion: GMB Structure. This motion is asking the GMB to promote, encourage growth and the accountability of diversity within its various local branches, workplaces and the community.

Currently, figures show that GMB can improve its effectiveness by ensuring that local branches actively reflect the engagement of its BAME members and all under-represented member, of which I was one. I used the word “was” because I pushed through those barriers. We need to create a structure that reaches out to those various members who are not strong enough to push through, but have the skills and passion that this great union needs and remains untapped.

Our local branches within the GMB should have a relationship with its members rather than client based in that you most often only get to see members at branch meetings when they have issues from their workplace or their community. We need to get it right. Let’s work from our local branch meetings and all the way to the top. Congress, please support. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Before I step down, I would like to thank Alan Fraser, Michelle Gordon, Nicola Nixon, Sonya Davis and Paul Maloney, our Southern Regional Secretary, for the improvements they have made in our GMB structures, and I know that more can be done. Thank you. (*Applause*)

JUNE MINNERY (In the Chair): I call the mover of Motion 114.

REPRESENTATION ON THE NATIONAL EQUALITY FORUM MOTION 114

114. REPRESENTATION ON THE NATIONAL EQUALITY FORUM

This Congress is disappointed that retired members are not being given a voice on the National Equality Forum (NEF).

The National Equality Forum has had a RMA appointed member with full voting rights since the Review of the NEF structure was agreed by Congress 2010.

At the end of last year the CEC agreed a new constitution which includes an RMA member on the NEF but only as an observer so has no voting rights.

Furthermore, the new agreed Constitution states that GMB members on the NEF should be for “working” people or those active in the workplace. This is discriminatory.

Retired members are an important equality strand and have vast resources to advise, assist and support all working and non-working members. Retired members may not be active in the workplace but do act as Accompanying Reps and are extremely active in branches.

We call on Congress to reconsider the RMA seat and give us back our voice.

EAST DEREHAM BRANCH
London Region

(*Withdrawn*)

JAN SMITH (London): Congress and President, I am speaking on Motion 114 — Equalities on the National Equality Forum. When the Working Party Booklet was agreed back in 2010 on Equalities, we were given full rights to be part of NEF, which meant that we could have representatives on that committee and also with a voice to speak and to vote. Howsoever, since putting in the resolution because it was heard that a new constitution was being set up, which would take away our voice, events have overtaken events to which the new constitution has been signed. It means that if we are sitting on the NEF committee then we have no voice and we have no voting rights.

I understand, rightly or wrongly, that the new constitution will be monitored as it is for 12 months. Can I say, at the end of that 12 months, give us back our voice, give us back our voting rights and stop the discrimination, because that is what is you have done. You have discriminated the elderly sitting on that committee. Also it is not equality. Let's have equality, stop discrimination, give us back our voice and let's work together. I had to say those words, but in doing so I will withdraw the motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jan. That's good of you. There is no one to second that. Can we go on to Motion 116, please?

PARITY FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCES AND SUMMITS MOTION 116

116. PARITY FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCES AND SUMMITS

This Congress should recognise the equal importance and value of each of our equality strands. We note that only Women and Young Members hold an annual National Conference/Summit which compliments the National Equality Conference. We note with disbelief however, the Young Members Summit has now been cut for 2019.

We call on Congress to treat all strands the same by allowing all recognised strands the ability to hold a two-day biennial (every second year) National Conference/Summit resourced by National Office Equality Department and organised with the strand members on the National Equality Forum (NEF) and/or National Strand Network, with a high emphasis on training, workplace policy development, campaigning and organising.

These events should be held at a weekend, thus giving access for more members to attend.

This will encourage more participation from regional self-organised groups to be more active in engaging members in their regions.

FULHAM 1 BRANCH
London Region

(Lost)

SARAH HURLEY (London): Congress, I move Motion 116. President, this motion asks for parity for all equality strands to have their own summits and build networks for their own strands in line with the young members who campaigned for many years to develop their network and have their summit. A women's conference was a recommendation as a result of GMB's Women's Taskforce, commissioned and endorsed by Congress. We now believe it is time to work on encouraging our other under-represented groups to build their networks, to develop policies and campaigns for themselves in safe spaces where their voices can be heard.

The CEC seeks withdrawal of this motion based on an audit undertaken by the National Equality Department, an audit that agreed changes to both the Equality Conference and the Young Members' Summit. That was a decision taken based on no meaningful consultation with any of the national equality forum networks, regional equality forums, self-organised groups or regional equality officers, who are all the people who will be directly affected by these changes. Regions have campaigned for years to have forums develop new rules and for under-represented groups to have a voice.

The national equality forums are the advisory bodies to the CEC and the regional councils on equality issues and so on, yet fundamental changes have been made without any meaningful discussion with members for change. We are now aware that changes have been made so now we will have summits for all the strands on one day before the National Equality Conference.

Whilst we welcome the efforts by the National Equality Department to accommodate a summit for each strand, we in the London Region feel it is difficult for members and regions to manage. We understand there are funding issues and that GMB does not have a bottomless pit, but we have suggestions for alternatives that we would like the opportunity to put forward for discussion in a member-led union.

We call on Congress to require the National Equality Department to work with regional and national equality forums as well as the national equality officers to develop how best to deliver this. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sarah. Secunder?

TARANJIT CHANA (London): Congress, I second Motion 116. Equality is at the heart of our Union. It is something that we all agree on and something we should all fight for. This motion is paramount in ensuring that the core of our Union is able to meet the needs of our members. When this motion was submitted to the CEC, the stance was to withdraw on the basis of the proposed changes of the way that the National Equality Conference and Summits operate. The idea of all equality strands having the ability to have their own summits every year before the National Equality Conference is a step in the right direction.

However, we feel there has not been enough consideration taken of intersexuality. Holding all strand summits at the same time and on the same day will not allow those who identify with more than one strand to attend the sectional conferences.

I was recently in a meeting where 15 out of 18 people in the room identified with more than one strand. I identify with more than one strand and I would and do not feel comfortable in having to decide which one I feel more passionate about to attend. *(Applause)* This may not be the case, but this is how I would have to make the decision.

We are aware that the National Equality Team works very hard and that there are limit to resources. They are small but an amazing team, but with the help of the national strand needs, the National Equality Forum and the amazing activists that we have in our Union, we feel that organising and running these summits will be

possible. Congress, we are a union bound by equality, so please support this motion.
(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Taranjit. I call the mover of Motion 117.

SUPPORT FOR YOUNG MEMBERS' STRUCTURES MOTION 117

117. SUPPORT FOR YOUNG MEMBERS' STRUCTURES

This Congress is concerned that the Trade Union Movement continues to face a crisis of ageing membership. Lower levels of trade union membership overall, combined with increasing casual and precarious working means that levels of union membership have dropped to only 10.2% for 20-24yr olds and 2% for 16-19yr olds in the latest government figures.

Our young members' structures are a crucial part of ensuring that our union remains in touch with the needs of young people and that we are giving new activists the skills and support they need to fully contribute to the union.

Congress 2017 referred a motion to the National Equality Forum to draw up a programme to achieve "properly managed funding" to support young member activity, including the young members' summit. No progress has been reported back and our young members have no allocated budget. The Young Members' summit has also now been cut.

This motion calls on the CEC to report back on progress and guarantee that the young members have a proper budget and a summit funded by national office every two years as a minimum.

NORTH WEST LONDON BRANCH
London Region

(Withdrawn)

RACHAEL HOOKWAY (London): Congress, I move Motion 117 — Support for Young Members' Structures. Young workers are the least likely demographic to be a member of a trade union, with membership of those aged 20 to 24 recently dropping to 7.2%, and only 2% for 16 to 19-year-olds. Given that young workers are those facing the brunt of the gig economy and face various levels of exploitation, we need unions more than ever.

Our young member structures are one of the most crucial parts of the union. They are fundamental in ensuring that the union keeps in touch with the needs of young people and supports them in their issues both inside and outside of the workplace. We are aware that the union provides activists with the skills and support they need to fully contribute to grow the union, and this should continue.

A motion brought to Congress in 2017 which asked the union to draw up a programme to achieve properly-managed funding to support young members' activity, including the Young Members' Summit was referred to the National Equality Forum. The young members requested this funding so that we could plan and manage our own recruitment campaigns, our summit and training sessions without having to go cap-in-hand asking branches and regions to fund our organising projects.

It was also noted that the CEC supports the principles of properly managed funding to support young member activity, including the Young Members' Summit, but that this responsibility was better managed by the NEF and National Office. But today the

young members have still not received any information on the outcome of this referral.

The Young Members' Network and Summit is an opportunity for the young members of the union to come together and organise around issues that matter to us. It is our summit and we democratically decide on what we will campaign for across regions for the coming year. It's not just that, though. It's an opportunity for learning and growing as an activist.

I attended my first summit three years ago when I was pretty new to getting involved in anything nationally. It was a much less intimidating environment for me and I felt I could learn more in an environment that was full of people who identified with and felt comfortable with. It gave me the confidence to get more involved and when I stood for the position of the national secretary of the network, not of the union, the support I received from the committee, the regions and delegates was truly overwhelming. The Summit encouraged, motivated and inspired me to continue in the fight for young members' issues and to grow this union.

At the summit, young members organised their own workshops based on feedback on the topics delegates want to learn about. We have run workshops on everything from moving Congress motions, which is probably why I am up *here*, to standing for leadership positions. The Summit prepares young members for engagement in the wider union. We also now hold an organizing school alongside the Summit which has helped us to bring new young workers through as reps. We had nearly 20 from our last Summit. The Summit also enables us to build networks with the wider movement. We have had speakers from MAC-Strike and we have built lasting relationships with other young workers across the country.

At our Summit we often have over 60 young members. Can any of you here remember being at a union event with that many young workers? Even here today there are only 26 young members in attendance as delegates out of over 400 people.

Six of the nine regions have more retired members here than workers under 30. If we want to continue the fight with the bosses and represent the workers we must engage more young members to continue our battles. (*Applause*) Young members consistently feel under represented at union events and this is often why they feel that trade unions have nothing to do with them. Our summit is a safe space where we can all come together to educate, agitate and organise.

When writing this speech I asked some of my fellow young members what Summit in the network meant to them. Here are a couple. One said: "A welcoming and warm environment where young members grow in confidence and build on their knowledge of the trade union Movement". Another said: "The best apprenticeship in the Movement for creating a generation of leaders to advance the cause of young workers and those who are not young workers". The Summit means a lot to us and many of us would not have got involved without it.

When submitting this motion the CEC response was to withdraw as a result of the recent changes to National Equality Conference and strand summits. However, the initial motion was submitted in 2017 and the changes that will be implemented were

not agreed until December 2018. As mentioned, the young members have not received any information on the progress of the previous motion and there is still no allocated funding. The future of our Summit is shaky.

The changes that were agreed recently should not impact on something that was discussed and agreed more than a year before.

This motion calls on the CEC and all the NEFs to report back on the progress of the 2017 motion and to uphold any future reassurances around young members and our Summit in line with our constitution. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Rachael. Secunder?

GORDON CULLUM (London): Congress, I second Motion 117. Following on from Rachael's excellent speech and in support of our young workers, young faces in photographs and at conferences are not enough. The under-investment and undervaluing of our young members in the labour Movement is dire. If we want a movement in 20 years, we need to get our act together. This doesn't mean a return to servicing or giving any discounts for joining a union. We need deep organising, putting class unity, education and young workers to the forefront of our struggle. That means especially young migrant workers who we badly need to join us in the trade union Movement.

A desire to change our structures to reflect those who we represent might mean upsetting the traditional guard who sit on 20 committees all challenging perceptions of what we think organising should be, but we either move forward, comrades, or we die! I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gordon. Does anyone wish to oppose any of these motions? (*No response*) No. Then I will ask Tim to respond for the CEC.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Good afternoon, Congress. President, Tim Roache responding on behalf of the CEC on this section: Equality and Inclusion.

First of all, on Motion 105 I do not disagree with a word that Steve says about it being time to open up, mate. I absolutely agree. Jamie, I agree with you as well about the devastating impacts of mental health. I am a mental health sufferer myself. What the CEC disagreed with is what you are suggesting as the way to deal with it. The answer is not, in the CEC's view, men-only mental health national and regional conferences. It is already on the agenda for the National Equality Conference year that mental health will be a fundamental part. We want it to be utterly inclusive. I don't want to sit in a room with all men any more than I know you guys would as well. It sounds like we are absolutely saying the same thing. We do take mental health very seriously and we will certainly be ensuring that it is on the National Equality Conference agenda, and please come along.

On Motion 109 the CEC is supporting with the qualification that we are working on ensuring we have as much accurate equality data as possible. There is still work to be done to provide that at branch level and increase our level of monitoring. So we hear every word that the mover and seconder has said. Thank you for that.

On Motions 116 and 117, let me be absolutely clear. Neither the SMT nor the CEC, nor the GMB Union, either under-invests nor undervalues our young members, and I take exception to any inference in any other way. You have to look at this as a further, wider picture, Conference. What we had up until the newly-proposed national equality structure was a 2½ person National Equalities Department. Nell, Paula and half of Mel's time, who were arranging conference after conference after meeting after summits after conference for LGBT, BAME, disabled, black workers and young workers. That is all very laudable and all absolutely crucially important issues for the GMB. But we spent over £135,000 in a year just on those bits alone, and those 2½ brilliant people were just unable to get on with the work that we heard this morning in some of the reports that they delivered. What we have said to all of those strands, and it is the SMT who made the decision — we heard what young members said and we heard what all of the strands have said —and who are asked to manage our resources said: "Let's try and put all of the summits on a Friday and then we will have the National Equality Conference leading into the Saturday and Sunday". I hear Tarajit's point, I have heard it many times and I am not dismissing it at all. What happens if you are on a number strands? We will look at that and deal with that, but we physically cannot continue spending £135,000 a year and using 2½ people just to keep on arranging conferences, summits and meetings, important though they are.

But I have personally consulted with the young members. I have personally met them in my office, and I gave them an assurance, and I will give you another assurance, because I absolutely value the work you do and every single stroke that you do on behalf of the GMB. I promised you then that you will have an organising event this year, over two days, one day of which you can commit to your own democracies, talking about who is going to lead on behalf of young people and what your strategic direction will be. I gave you that assurance in my office. I give you that assurance again from this rostrum.

But this new equality structure was agreed only on Saturday night by your Executive. I am asking you, Conference, to allow that structure to play out. If in 12 months' time it isn't working, we will look at why it isn't work and what we are going to do instead to make it even better.

As a result, I urge Southern Region, if you will agree, to refer the motion. I was simply saying refer it, please, to our National Equality Department so we can ensure that we have all-inclusive event on dealing with mental health. I ask you to support Motion 109 with the qualification I have outlined and for Motions 115 and 117 to be withdrawn. Thank you for listening. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tim. Before I take the vote, I am continuing because we've got four motions left and I would rather do them today than take them over. I don't want anything like to happen. Could the movers and seconders of Motions 138, 140 and 143 come to the front please.

I will now go back and ask if Southern Region accepts the reference back on Motion 105. (*Agreed*) Thank you. On Motion 109, does Southern Region accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Will London Region withdraw Motion that motion?

SARAH HURLEY (London): Which one?

THE PRESIDENT: 116.

SARAH HURLEY (London): No.

THE PRESIDENT: In that case, the CEC will be opposing. London, do you agree to withdraw Motion 117? (*Agreed*) In that case, in relation to Motion 105, Southern Region has agreed to reference. All those in favour, please show? All those against? That is carried.

Motion 105 was REFERRED.

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 109. Southern have agreed the qualification. All those in favour, please show? Any against? That's carried.

Motion 109 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Motions 114 and 115 were withdrawn.

Motion 114 was WITHDRAWN.

Motion 115 was WITHDRAWN.

THE PRESIDENT: On Motion 116, the CEC is opposing the motion. All those in favour of the motion, please show? All those against? That is lost.

Motion 116 was LOST.

Motion 117 was WITHDRAWN.

THE PRESIDENT: Regarding the following motions, I ask you to really, really, keep to your time limits. That would be grand. I want to get through these motions on time, because the CEC has a meeting to get to. I know you have all got your regional parties.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY
MENTAL HEALTH ABSENCE
MOTION 138**

138 MENTAL HEALTH ABSENCE

This Congress instructs the CEC to liaise with the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) to classify absence due to mental health in the workplace as Riddor reportable.

R35 ROCESTER JCB GENERAL BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Carried)

MARTIN COOPER (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I am speaking on Motion 138 — Mental Health Absence. This Congress instructs the CEC to liaise with the Health & Safety Executive to classify absence due to mental health in the workplace as Riddor reportable. Riddor is the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and

Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013. Riddor places a duty on employers to report serious workplace accidents and occupational diseases and dangerous occurrences to the Health & Safety Executive.

So what exactly should be reported currently? Deaths and injuries, occupational diseases, carcinogens, mutations, biological agents, specified injuries to workers and dangerous accidents and gas incidents. This all sounds very sensible but not all accidents are reported or need to be reported currently. It is only when the accident is work-related resulting in an injury of a type that is reportable. Not even all deaths in the workplace are reportable, suicides being the exception. Only specific injuries have to be reported, so when you break a finger, thumb or toe it's okay not to be reported.

Accidents which result in an employee being off for seven consecutive days must also be reported. Oh, yes, and occupational diseases likely to be caused at work must also be reported. These include carpal tunnel syndrome, severe cramp, dermatitis, asthma and tendonitis. On top of these reportable, is a failure of load-bearing lifting equipment. However, if an employee comes back to work after an accident and before having seven days off, an employer doesn't have to report the issue. I'll bet no one has ever witnessed employees sat in an office after an injury either doing nothing or very little to avoid a reportable incident. I know I have.

Even more unbelievable is the fact that time off work with related stress, depression and a number of other mental disorders don't have to be reported. This is scandalous. Clearly, the HSE states that, for the purpose of Riddor reporting, that stress-related conditions come from prolonged periods of pressure rather than distinctive effort. Even post-traumatic stress disorder, which is regarded as a disease, is not even reported on the list.

Even more unbelievable is the fact that time off work with related stress, anxiety or depression and numerous other work-related mental incidents also don't have to be reported to the HSE under Riddor. Clearly, the HSE's own literature states that for the purpose of reporting stress-related conditions come from prolonged periods of pressure rather a distinctive event. Even post-traumatic stress disorder, which is regarded as a disease, is not even reportable and need not be reported.

It even states that work-related stress could lead to physical damage. So if you are feeling negative, indecisive, isolated, nervous and unable to concentrate, then you may be suffering from stress and are advised to speak to several bodies, including your trade union representative. But it does not say it wants reporting.

One of the most common issues affecting absence and lost time is mental health or, to be precise, poor mental health which does not have to be reported under Riddor. It's about time it was! Making stress, anxiety and a mental issue reportable would go a long way in making how important we should take the problem and support its inclusion. Prioritising a reportable mental health issue would go a long way to help our fellow sufferers in making awareness equally as important as dermatitis and cramp if reported to Riddor. Congress, I urge you to support this motion and lobby our bodies to change the policy and make work-related mental health issues reportable under Riddor. Together we can make a difference. GMB! *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Brilliant! Thank you, Martin. Secunder?

WARINDER JUSS (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I am speaking to second Motion 138. Just a few minutes ago we heard how important mental health issues are in the motion. Regulation 8 of the Riddor Regulations says that employers have to report to the Health & Safety Executive certain diagnosed reportable diseases which are linked with occupational exposure to specified hazards. These include diseases such as occupational dermatitis, occupation asthma and tendonitis. The law does recognise that, just like physical injuries, in certain specified circumstances, compensation is recoverable for diagnosable psychiatric injuries and disorders, so why do we have this inconsistency where a psychiatric injury caused by, say, work-related stress is not reportable?

Congress, I don't need to emphasise how prevalent work-related stress is amongst our members. If you have ever tried to claim compensation for work-related stress, you will understand how difficult it is because there are very specific and stringent legal hurdles that have to be overcome.

There is a House of Lords' authority going back to 1996 — the case of *Page v Smith* — which confirmed that no distinction should be made between a physical injury and psychiatric damage. We have legal authority to do what we plan to do. We owe it to our members to campaign for absence from work due to mental health injury to be reportable under Riddor, just like a physical injury. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I call the mover of Motion 140.

MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK — CHANGE THE WORKPLACE NOT THE WORKERS
MOTION 140

140. MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK – CHANGE THE WORKPLACE NOT THE WORKER

This Congress notes that 1 in 6 workers in the UK are affected by mental health issues such as anxiety and depression, and many more suffer from work-place stress. Congress is concerned that despite the prevalence of mental health issues, there is still a stigma surrounding mental health in workplaces and many workers feel unable to talk openly about what they are going through or seek appropriate help and adjustments in their work.

Congress calls for radical change in our workplace cultures so that nobody feels like they have to call in sick, or even resign, because of mental health issues that, without this stigma, would otherwise be manageable.

Congress would like to see all GMB workplaces signed up to the Time to Change pledge that aims to change how we think and act about mental health in the workplace and makes sure employees facing these problems feel supported.

Alongside this, Congress would like to see mental health awareness embedded in induction and training and for workers to understand their rights under the Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act, including the right to take disability leave for regular absences, such as needing to attend counselling.

B59 BRUSSELS BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

SHAMIK DAS (Southern): Congress, I move Motion 140 — Mental Health at Work — Change the Workplace not the Workers. I'm a first-time delegate, second-time speaker. *(Applause)*

President and Congress, one in four people will experience a mental health problem each year. One in six people have reported experience in having a common mental health problem, such as anxiety or depression in any given week. That's millions of people suffering, often in silence, without support from their employers, with family, friends and colleagues unaware because while there is an understanding with physical health, when it comes to mental health it is seldom spoken about. Why is this? It's the result of workplace culture.

Despite its prevalence, there is still stigma surrounding mental health in the workplaces. Many workers feel unable to talk openly about what they are going through and seek appropriate help and adjustment in their work. Workers feel like they have to call in sick or even resign. Well, Congress, it's time to change! It's time to change the workplace culture and the work-pace culture. Workers must be able to feel open and honest without fear of discrimination and not forced to hide their mental health issues, which only exacerbates the stress, loneliness, anxiety and depression. It's time to change public awareness of mental health. Although change is happening — we saw it with the BBC's recent mental health series, with documentaries and dramas — it is time to change the training workers receive, so training is not just in physical first-aid but mental health first-aid as well. It is time to change the legislation to update our culture, the Disability Discrimination Act, and bring in the right to disability leave for regular absences such as needing to attend counselling. It is time to change the amount of money spent on mental health, which was just £12.2 billion in 2018-2019, which is only 10% of the budget of the Department of Health and Social Care. Congress, it is time to change the Government so we can increase spending and empower workers to change the workplace culture, to change society and change our economy. So it truly works for the many and the few. I urge you to support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Brilliant. Thank you, Shamik. Secunder?

PAUL STACK (Southern): President and Congress, I am seconding Motion 140 — Mental Health at Work. There is an epidemic in our workplaces. One in four of us will experience a mental health problem in any one year. That's a quarter of us sitting in this room! Stress and anxiety seem to be ever present, negatively affecting our sense of wellbeing. The modern world of work demands great attention in the shape of emails, tablets, trackers and mobile phones ever present.

The spaces that use to exist for workers to re-charge their batteries are fewer and harder to find. Mental health problems are the inevitable outcome of an ever-demanding workplace. All too often it is the worker who is supposed to change. They are supposed to develop resilience. This wouldn't be acceptable in any other area of health and safety, but it seems to be acceptable when it comes to mental health.

By adopting the Time for Change Pledge, workplaces can show they are serious about changing their approach to mental health. Change the Workplace — Not the Worker. Support the motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. I call the mover of Motion 143.

**BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS AND PROTECTION FROM ABUSE FOR MENTAL HEALTH WORKERS
MOTION 143**

143. BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS AND PROTECTION FROM ABUSE FOR MENTAL HEALTH WORKERS

This Congress calls on the CEC to campaign better working conditions and protection from abuse for Mental Health Workers by continuing to campaign for increased staffing levels in mental health services.

More than 42,000 reported attacks on staff in the last year in the mental health trusts who responded. The figure is more than a quarter higher than for the corresponding trusts four years earlier.

"People are now much more unwell when they come into units, there's a shortage of beds and staff are stressed," "It's a powder keg. It just needs the slightest thing to happen."

In the report, called *Struggling to Cope*, 42% of responders said they had been victims of violence in the last year working in mental health.

Almost half (48%) of the respondents were planning to leave their work in mental health or were thinking about doing so. This is worrying given the drop in numbers of students applying for nursing degrees and the recruitment and retention problems in mental health settings of those either leaving or thinking of leaving, more than a quarter (26%) stated that it was because their own mental health and well-being were suffering.

Although we applaud the successful Protect The Protectors' Law and acknowledge it was a great victory for Emergency Workers that it will become a specific criminal offence in England to assault an emergency service worker, and attacking an emergency worker will be an aggravating factor for sentencing purposes - including for sexual assaults. There is a long way to go before these laws are enforced and the culture of the NHS particularly in mental health changes

We need to impress upon the Government and NHS Trusts that they must address the health and wellbeing of our members.

BRADFORD DISTRICT CARE TRUST BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

KEVIN OBERTHORPE (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Motion 143 — Better Working Conditions and Protection from Abuse for Mental Health Workers.

President, thanks to greater public awareness, there has been a change in attitude towards mental health issues from employers. Due to many employers having dedicated wellbeing support for staff, mental health related absences have fallen by 30%. However, what about those who actually work in mental health? As a result of almost 10 years of cuts, their physical and mental health is suffering with very little or no support. Dedicated mental health workers are paying the price for the Tory policy of austerity and putting money before people. We cannot let this state of affairs continue.

Tens of thousands of workers in mental health have been the victim of violence while doing their jobs. As well as physical assaults, increased workloads contribute to increased levels of stress. Increasing numbers of staff are planning to leave mental health work, while there is a reduction in students applying for nursing degrees.

Recruitment and retention, which we all know about being in a union, has become a major issue. Something has to be done to support the mental health workers. Although we applaud the successful Protect The Protectors' Law and acknowledge it was a great victory for emergency workers that it will become a specific criminal offence in England to assault an emergency service worker, attacking an emergency worker will be an aggravating factor for sentencing purposes. We need something similar for the mental health worker, which would be a start. But getting such measures into place takes time, but we need action now. There needs to be a recognition of the valuable work done by mental health workers by both the Government and the NHS trusts. They need to be more supportive. It is not just a simple matter of more money and increasing wages, but there needs to be a culture change. There are dangers to both the physical and mental health of those working in mental health work, and steps need to be taken to reduce the risks facing those working in the field of mental health.

Nobody should suffer physical assaults and mental stress while at work, least of all those working for our wellbeing. Please support our members working in mental health. Please support Motion 114. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ken. Secunder?

YVETTE MITCHELL (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): President and Congress, I second Motion 143. As we all know, working for the mental health service comes with many challenges and difficulties for those supporting our most vulnerable members in society. But the mental health workers' working environment is plagued with short staffing, lack of appropriate equipment and insufficient training. This causes stress, tension and anxiety, which in turn can and does affect the equilibrium of those being cared for. We know that having a working environment that is calm, fully supplied and fully staffed, where staff members are trained well and nurtured, supported on and at every level, emotionally, mentally, physically and psychologically, leads to a better and safer workplace.

It is suggested that the Protect the Protectors' legislation should be implemented for those working in the mental health service, believing that this is the best way forward. May I say that the aim is not just to implement laws to react to situations but to prevent abuse from happening. It has been reported in north Wales that assaults on mental health staff has halved within the last five years. This decline is attributed to a team of specialist nurses. Therefore, we need to call upon the NHS trusts and the Government to look at this success and act by implementing a team for all trusts, thus creating a better working environment and protection for mental health staff from being abused. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Brilliant. Does anybody wish to oppose any of these motions? *(No response)* No. Then I call Michael Husbands to respond for the CEC.

MICHAEL HUSBANDS (CEC, Commercial Services): Madam President and Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. The CEC is supporting Motions 138 and 140 with qualifications. The CEC also supports Motion 140. I shall give both qualifications now.

Dealing, first, with Motion 138, GMB has an existing policy demanding that work-related stress should be made Riddor reportable. This motion would helpfully us to extend this to include post-traumatic stress disorder and other occupational conditions. The qualification is that this would only be the case where the condition has been caused or made worse by work. It would not apply to over episode of mental health that manifests our work.

On Motion 140, we strongly agree that every employer should include the management of mental risk and issues as part of their induction training. We also support in principle the idea that employers should sign up to schemes, such as Time for Change, to include the widest possible participation in culture change. The qualification is that we would not wish to restrict ourselves to one single partner organisation. There are sectoral initiatives, such as Rights in Mind in the construction sector, which may be better positioned to effect change in the relevant workplaces.

Therefore, Congress, please support Motions and 138 and 140 with the qualifications just outlined. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Michael. Does Birmingham accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Does Southern accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. In that case, I will put all three motions to the vote: 138, 140 and 143. The CEC is supporting Motion 143. All those in favour, please vote? All those against? They are carried. Thank you.

Motion 138 was CARRIED.

Motion 140 was CARRIED.

Motion 143 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: The last motion for today is Emergency Motion 5 on ASDA. Could the mover and seconder come forward?

ASDA RETAIL — NO TO “CONTRACT 6” EMERGENCY MOTION 5

Congress condemns ASDA’s threat to impose less favourable terms and conditions on its workforce through the so-called “Contract 6”.

Two years ago ASDA introduced a new flexible contract under the banner of “Your Choice”. This contract was voluntary and paid £1-00 per hour more than other ASDA contracts. Since its introduction, the pay differential has reduced to just 63 pence and less than 15% of the workforce has volunteered to take up the new contract.

On 9th April Asda announced its intention to remove “Your Choice” and move to “No Choice”. The end of the consultation period is imminent and we meet Asda on Wednesday morning for crunch talks.

We call on Congress to demonstrate its support for our ASDA members and show its backing for a campaign, starting this week in Brighton to improve the pay and conditions of ASDA workers, up to and including industrial action.

Branch A56

Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

RON POWELL (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I am from the ASDA 1st Branch and national retail rep. I move Emergency Motion 5 — ASDA Retail — No to “Contract 6”.

President and Congress, our members in ASDA are facing the daunting prospect of having their lives ruined by ASDA’s intention to impose new contract terms and conditions on its workforce in all of its shops in England, Wales and Scotland.

At the moment, the contract — Contract 6 — currently exists, but our members have the choice as to whether or not they want to sign up to it. That choice is being removed to become “No Choice”! Congress, our members are telling us “No Way!” Since the voluntary signing of the contract was introduced in 2017, only 15% of the employers have signed up to it, and that was when the pay gap was £1-00 an hour. Since then the pay differential between the Contract 6 rate and the other contracts, which are paid at the National Minimum Wage, has diminished. It now stands at 63 pence per hour.

ASDA believes that by offering the new rate of £9 an hour that it is a justifiable reward for our members’ flexibility. Do you know what, Congress? Our members don’t think that because we’ve asked them. They told us “It’s not the money. It’s the removal of our current terms and conditions that’s the problem”. Our members don’t want a contract imposed on them that introduces a flexibility clause that will see the hours and days that they work could be moved around, potentially, every four weeks. This is a flexibility clause where we have no visibility or confidence that members will be treated fairly and will have things like child care and parental care reconsidered. How can you plan your life based on that prospect?

Congress, there is no give and take on this at the minute. All we can see from ASDA is ‘take’ with scarce regard for our members’ interests. You could call it the ‘casualisation of the workforce’!

ASDA believes that £9 is a good rate of pay. They believe that they are a market leader by offering that. Congress, it isn’t. It still does not remove the prospect of retail pay poverty that our members face. It is not £9 an hour when you take into consideration unpaid breaks that are already in the contract. It is not a good deal

when nights are no longer considered unsociable hours because the night premium window has been shortened from midnight to 5 am, and when bank holiday premiums have been removed. ASDA thinks that by making colleagues work bank holidays “it meets our customers’ needs”! Congress, we know why it meets their customers’ needs, because those who choose to shop on bank holidays have already been given it off by their employer. (*Cheers, applause and table thumping*)

Our members have told us that this new contract is unfair. It has no human consideration for the workforce. They don’t want to sign it but they don’t want the prospect of losing their job if they don’t sign it. Congress, this is a dismiss or engagement negotiation that we are in with ASDA, There is no redundancy pay if you choose not to sign it.

In the history of this great Union’s industrial involvement with ASDA we have never, ever witnessed a membership and workforce so united in opposition to this proposal. The demonstration by our members to it on May 1st in Leeds clearly highlighted the strength of feeling and utter desire to fight against this new contract. We should give our members in ASDA every opportunity to exercise this right.

The National Forum will meet here again with ASDA tomorrow in Brighton. So, Congress, stand with us and alongside our members in ASDA and say no to this contract! I move. (*A standing ovation with cheers and table thumping*)

THE PRESIDENT: Hold on! Is that emergency motion formally seconded or is there a seconder? Decide which one of you is going to second it, please.

CAROL CLARKSON (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I second Emergency Motion 5 — ASDA Retail — No to “Contract 6”. Comrades, what can I say? ASDA has given us a wage rise from £8.21 to £9.00. The point is that for 79 pence an hour they want to take away all my terms and conditions. They want to take my bank holidays, they want to take our service days and they want to take our breaks. They also want to reduce the night window for our night workers.

Over the past couple of years we have seen our workforce slimmed down to the bare bones. Now we work harder for less. We’re going backwards. I thought that by the year 2020 we would work less hours and earn more. Well, it looks like I got that wrong. The new contract is not something my members want. ASDA tell us that they can’t afford to pay us for breaks and bank holidays. They need to be able to compete with the likes of Tescos or Ronsons. Well, Wal-Mart are richer beyond our widest dreams. It is now time to look after the workforce, not to look after the shareholders. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot believe that anyone can be in opposition, so hold your placards up if you are in support of that motion. (*Cheers*)

Emergency Motion 5 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: There is now a photo opportunity. If you would like to turn to face the back of the hall. Make sure you are orange/green, orange/green. Hold up

your placards really high. This is to show the strength of feeling of Congress on this issue. Singing of *We Shall Overcome!*

A MEMBER: “Whose choice? Our choice. Whose choice? Our choice. Whose choice? Our choice. Let’s fight ASDA! (*Cheers*)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, thank you for your patience once again. That is a very good and high note to finish on. See you tomorrow morning at 9.30. Thank you.

Congress adjourned for the day.

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v Text of the Mental Deficiency Act 1913, accessed at <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/acts/1913-mental-deficiency-act.pdf>

vi EHRC, *Is Britain Fairer? The state of equality and human rights 2018*, 25 October 2018, pages 8 and 9 <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/britain-fairer-2018>

vii Table B7 in Longhi, EHRC, *Research Report 107: The Disability Pay Gap*, August 2017, page 87 <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/research-report-107-the-disability-pay-gap.pdf>

viii British Social Attitudes Survey 2017

ix According to a ComRes survey quoted in *People Management*, One in four UK employers would not hire someone with a disability, 21 February 2019 <https://www.peoplemanagement.co.uk/news/articles/one-four-uk-employers-would-not-hire-someone-with-disability>

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