



10 DOWNING STREET
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THE PRIME MINISTER

13th November 2008

Dear Colleague,

I wanted to write to you following the statement Rt. Hon James Purnell MP, Secretary Of State for Work and Pensions, made in the House today about the Government's decision to renew the Post Office Card Account.

I know that uncertainty about the future of POCA has been worrying you and your constituents. Many of you have told me about people you've met at surgeries, emails you've received or letters that have been in your local newspapers about this issue.

People's natural sense of attachment to their local Post Office has been increased because they are anxious about what's happening with the economy. The Post Office is seen as a safe, secure and reliable provider of services and people just want to know they can get on with ordinary life in these extraordinary times.

So today we've added to our package to protect people's homes, jobs, savings and pensions with a new measure to help ensure people get through the downturn in a fair way. In awarding a new contract for the continuation of POCA directly to the Post Office we have guaranteed an important source of income and, according to the National Federation of Sub-Post Masters, helped keep as many as 3,000 extra post offices open and serving local communities.

Following a high profile campaign, we have been able to find a fair solution to a problem that's been on a lot of people's minds. With your support this Government is offering a subsidy of £1.7billion to help maintain a national post office network. Today's decision and that record investment mean we now have modern Post Office branches in the right places to serve people.

Thanks for taking part in the debate and for helping to take one more step towards the fair society.

Best wishes,

Gordon Brown