

Over 100 FM businesses sign Open Letter to the Government about Employment Rights Bill

1 year ago



Entrepreneurs Dominic Ponniah and Malcolm Hills, the CEO of office and commercial cleaning company [Cleanology](#) and the MD of Think FM respectively, have co-authored an open letter to PM Sir Keir Starmer, Deputy PM Angela Rayner and Business and Trade Secretary Jonathan Reynolds setting out strong opposition to key elements of the proposed Employment Rights Bill.

The co-authors are convinced that the controversial Bill will have a devastating impact on the FM sector – and their grave concerns have been backed by some of the biggest names in facilities management. Collectively the 128 signatory companies represent £7 billion in UK GDP and employ over 156,000 people.

The Bill proposes large-scale changes to employment law including making unfair dismissal a day one right, significantly increasing union powers and introducing statutory sick pay from day one.

In the letter, which Mr Ponniah has published on LinkedIn, he states: “We are deeply concerned that some of the Bill’s provisions will have serious unintended consequences that could harm both good employers and the very employees that the Bill seeks to protect.

“Introducing day-one unfair dismissal rights will increase the legal and financial risk of taking on new hires and discourage employers from offering opportunities to individuals who need a first step, a second chance, or time to prove themselves – and further will discourage growth and reduce employment opportunities — especially in labour-intensive sectors like ours.

“Probationary periods are a vital part of responsible recruitment, allowing both parties to assess suitability

before long-term commitments are made. This change will also encourage and increase the number of vexatious claims against employers, over-burdening an already overstretched tribunal system heavily weighted in favour of the employee.

“Meanwhile, introducing statutory sick pay from day one places a new, immediate cost on employers — especially in sectors like ours where staffing models are built around tight margins and stringent contracts. While we support fair and compassionate sick leave policies, the reality is that many SMEs simply cannot absorb this additional cost without significant impact.

“This additional burden will force some employers to reduce staff headcount or reduce their hours, turn down new contracts or even exit the market altogether. None of these outcomes will benefit our employees or our customers, many of whom are public services”.

Mr Ponniah stresses the letter – which can be read here – is ‘not party-political’. Most of the Government’s planned reforms to Employment Rights are expected to come in by next year, with other key reforms including curbing ‘zero hour’ contracts, clamping down on ‘fire and rehire’ and enhancing workplace protection.

Cleanology – headquartered in Vauxhall, South West London, and with regional offices in Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol and Scotland – runs campaigns throughout the year to raise funds and awareness for hygiene poverty and staff participate in fund-raising opportunities such as marathons.

The family owned and run company has been providing professional commercial & office cleaning services, property maintenance and support services to companies across the UK, for almost 25 years. Clients include blue-chip corporates, royal palaces and some of the world’s most famous brands.