**X October 2018**

**Dear MP**

I live in your constituency at [INSERT ADDRESS] and I am a social worker.

As you may know workplace stress is the biggest cause of long-term sickness absence in the public sector across the UK. It can cause physical and psychological ill health, with the overall cost to the economy reaching approximately £800 per employee per year.

Research undertaken by British Association of Social Workers (BASW) the Social Workers Union (SWU) and Bath Spa University (August 2018) has found that social workers are strongly engaged in their work and want the very best outcomes for service users, but they are hampered by poor working conditions and a lack of resources. Some key findings are: -

* Compared to the UK average, working conditions were **worse than 90%-95%** of other employees in both public and private sector occupations,
* Social workers worked an average of **11 hours per week** more than they are contracted to, with levels of stress and wellbeing also much greater than the UK average,
* **Nearly half** of all social workers are also dissatisfied in their jobs,
* **Two thirds** have attended work while ill at least twice in the last year,
* **6 in 10** are looking to leave their job in an average of 15 months.

It takes up to four years to qualify as a social worker and high attrition rates will increase reliance on contract workers, which in turn will increase the cost.

**I would also welcome an opportunity to meet with you and talk about the work that I do, perhaps at one of your surgeries. My contact details are on this email.**

More information is available at [www.BASW.co.uk/working-conditions](http://www.BASW.co.uk/working-conditions)

I look forward to hearing from you soon

Best wishes,

[INSERT NAME]