#SaveUnionLearningMPlet

Date

Dear **Name of MP**

**The recent announcement about the Union Learning Fund**

As a constituent I am asking you to lobby the government to reverse its decision to cut all the funding for the Union Learning Fund (ULF) and unionlearn from April of next year.

Equity, the National Union of Journalists, the Musicians’ Union and The Writers’ Guild of Great Britain are the four trade unions that offer a programme of ULF-funded free training to their members via FEU Training, to support them in developing business skills to develop their careers. The FEU represents more than 100,000 writers, journalists, musicians and actors.

**If you have taken part in FEU learning, explain how it helped you**

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on the livelihoods of members of all four unions, and the creative industries in which they work, and many have fallen through the gaps of the government’s Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS).

To date, 40 per cent of Equity members have received no money from SEISS, 34 per cent of musicians are considering abandoning their career and 33 per cent of journalists said their work had dried up. Closed theatres and a backlog of scripts and productions mean playwrights are facing months with no income.

Given exhortations from the government in recent weeks for workers affected by the pandemic to reskill, it is surprising that the decision has been made to cut off this vital source of funding. FEU Training’s blend of business skills training, which has adapted to a solely online model during Covid-19, includes brand building, marketing, financial planning and running a successful crowdfunding campaign – all skills that are supporting self-employed creatives to adapt and survive during these difficult times.

The creative industries are worth over £111 billion to the UK economy and the members of the Federation of Entertainment unions power this sector. Given that a widely acknowledged achievement of ULF projects has been empowering and incentivising workers to re-engage in learning and training, I would like you to ask Gavin Williamson, Education Secretary, to reconsider the decision to cut the funding for ULF and unionlearn.

Yours sincerely,