STUC extremely disappointed at blanket blocking of opposition amendments to emergency Coronavirus legislation.

May 20th 2020

The STUC has reacted with extreme disappointment to developments in Parliament today, as amendment after amendment to the Coronavirus (No.2) Bill was voted down often by an alliance of SNP and Tory votes.

The STUC had voiced support for a number of amendments including measures for ensuring better pay and conditions in social care, ensuring trade union access to workplaces and a series of actions to better support renters.

STUC General Secretary Designate Roz Foyer said: "We cannot fault the Scottish Government for their willingness to engage with trade unions during this crisis and we have managed to achieve significant progress through this relationship. However, today we saw the SNP and Tories voting down some really positive amendments put forward by members of different political parties.

"The housing measures proposed by Andy Wightman and Pauline McNeill would have alleviated much of the fear and insecurity being experienced by private renters and provided much needed security for the hundreds of thousands of our members who are unemployed, furloughed or living pay check to pay check. Yet rather than protect tenants, the SNP chose to side with landlords.

"Neil Findlay and Monica Lennon's proposals would have given trade unions greater access to workplaces, ensured payment of the living wage, and established national collective bargaining in care. Yet the SNP and Conservatives chose to turn their backs on these measures.

"Scotland seems to be united in applauding the enormous sacrifice of carers, but clapping doesn't pay the bills. Improving workers' rights, give real teeth to the Scottish Government's Fair Work aspirations and ending the historic undervaluation of carers, would have been the right step in making our appreciation meaningful.

"Today is a step backwards in the Scottish Government's aspirations to support workers and tenants dealing with the fallout of coronavirus."