

QUESTION TO BE ASKED OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE COMMITTEE ON TUESDAY 18th MARCH 2003, BY SENATOR E.P. VIBERT

Question

Would the President inform members whether or not the Committee has investigated all the 'j' category employees who failed to include their rent subsidies in their tax returns for the purpose of determining whether any of their children have received education grants for higher education, which is means tested and based on declared earnings, and, if not, would the President assure members that such an investigation will be carried out and that details of how much has been overpaid in grants to these persons, if applicable, will be given to members?

Answer

Officers in the Department for Education, Sport and Culture have been working with the Income Tax Department to identify all 'j' category employees who received rental subsidies over the last five years. Whether or not these were declared on employees tax returns is a matter between the employee and the Comptroller of Income Tax.

For the 2003/2004 academic year, there are two 'j' category employees who have applied for student awards for higher education. Of these, one employee did not declare a gross family income and therefore pays the maximum parental contribution. The second is not in receipt of a rent subsidy and receives an amount towards tuition fees but not the maintenance grant. Information relating to previous years is currently being collated.