

Debate on the Address: [1st Day]

Sarah Wollaston Chair, Health and Social Care Committee, Chair, Liaison Committee (Commons), Chair, Liaison Committee

Does my right hon. Friend agree that this is also a desperately anxious time for British citizens living elsewhere in the European Union who face not knowing whether they will be able have healthcare or what will happen to their pensions six months from now? This is intolerable, and entirely avoidable.

Jo Swinson Deputy Leader, Liberal Democrats, Liberal Democrat Spokesperson (Foreign Affairs), Leader of the Liberal Democrats

My hon. Friend is quite right. In this place, we often have the debates, the braying and the back-and-forth across the Dispatch Box, and it can feel like the pantomime or theatre, but this is people's lives that we are talking about, and some of them are sitting in the Gallery today. I was going to ask the Prime Minister, but he is no longer here, so I hope that the Ministers will have the courage to look Kristin, Margot, Bina and Jennifer in the eye and apologise for the anxiety that they have caused to them and to the 3 million other citizens from the EU27. Our country is better than this. We do not turn our back on those who have come over to be our doctors and nurses, teachers and carers. We do not turn our back on our family, friends and loved ones, and we do not turn our back on those who, like the rest of us, only want to make our country a better place. That is not who we are.

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