



Sixty Church of England Bishops have joined with other faith leaders to call for a rethink the Government's two-child limit on benefits.

They have signed a joint letter alongside representatives from other churches as well as Jewish and Muslim organisations.

The letter published in *The Times* argues that the policy - which restricts the level of financial support given to households with more than two children - is trapping families in poverty.

It coincides with the publication of a new report from the End Child Poverty coalition assessing the impact of the limit, which was introduced a year ago.

The Bishop of Durham, a signatory to the letter said: "It is simply not right that some children get support and others don't.

"We share a moral responsibility to make sure that everyone in our country has a decent standard of living and the same chances in life, no matter who they are or where they come from."

More details can be found in an [announcement from the End Child Poverty coalition](#).

The letter is published [here](#).

The report, entitled *~~Unhappy Birthday: the two-child limit at one year~~*, is also published today.

the full text of the letter reads:

Sir, Today the “two-child limit” policy, which restricts tax credit and universal credit to the first two children in a family, has been in place for a year. The policy is making it harder for parents to achieve a stable and resilient family life. By 2021, 640,000 families will have been affected. Most are low-earning working families, most have three children and some will have made decisions about family size when they were able to support children through earnings alone, but later claimed tax credits or universal credit after bereavement, redundancy, separation, disability, illness or simply low pay.

The policy is expected to tip an estimated extra 200,000 children into poverty. It also conveys the regrettable message that some children matter less than others, depending on their place in the sibling birth order.

It is a grave concern that there are likely to be mothers who will face an invidious choice between poverty and terminating an unplanned

pregnancy.

Children are a private joy and a public good. They are all equally deserving of subsistence support.

*The Rt Rev Sarah Mullally, Bishop of London; the Rt Rev Paul Butler, Bishop of Durham; Harun Khan, secretary general, Muslim Council of Britain; Gillian Merron, chief executive, Board of Deputies of British Jews; Dr Philip McCarthy, chief executive, Caritas Social Action Network; Alison Garnham, chief executive, Child Poverty Action Group; Shaykh Mohammad Yazdani Raza (Misbahi), London Fatwa Council; Jill Baker, vice-president of the Methodist Conference 2017-18; The Rev Loraine N Mellor, president of the Methodist Conference 2017-18; Sam Royston, chairman, End Child Poverty Coalition; Paul Parker, recording clerk, Quakers in Britain; the Rt Rev Tim Dakin, Bishop of Winchester; the Rt Revd Graham James, Bishop of Norwich; the Rt Rev David Urquhart, Bishop of Birmingham; the Rt Rev Dr John Inge, Bishop of Worcester; the Rt Rev Christopher Cocksworth, Bishop of Coventry; the Rt Rev Steven Croft, Bishop of Oxford; Rt Rev Alan Smith, Bishop of St Albans; the Rt Rev James Newcome, Bishop of Carlisle; the Rt Rev Christopher Foster, Bishop of Portsmouth; the Rt Rev Stephen Cottrell, Bishop of Chelmsford; the Rt Rev James Langstaff, Bishop of Rochester; the Rt Rev Stephen Conway, Bishop of Ely; the Rt Rev Christopher Chessun, Bishop of Southwark; the Rt Rev Nick Baines, Bishop of Leeds; the Rt Rev Nicholas Holtam, Bishop of Salisbury; the Rt Rev Rachel Treweek, Bishop of Gloucester; the Rt Rev Christine Hardman, Bishop of Newcastle; the Rt Rev Tim Thornton, Trustee of Feeding Britain; the Rt Rev Dr David Walker, Bishop of Manchester; the Rt Rev Richard Frith, Bishop of Hereford; the Rt Rev Paul Williams, Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham; the Rt Revd Martyn Snow, Bishop of Leicester; the Rt Revd Michael Ipgrave, Bishop of Lichfield; the Rt Rev Dr Pete Wilcox, Bishop of Sheffield; the Rt Rev Peter Eagles, Bishop of Sodor and Man; the Rt Rev Pete Broadbent, Bishop of Willesden; the Rt Rev Dr Alan Wilson, Bishop of Buckingham; the Rt Rev John Stroyan, Bishop of Warwick; the Rt Rev Clive Gregory, Bishop of Wolverhampton; the Rt Rev Mark Bryant, Bishop of Jarrow; the Rt Rev Alan Winton, Bishop of Thetford; the Rt Rev Richard Blackburn, Bishop of Warrington; the Rt Rev Geoff Annas, Bishop of Stafford; the Rt Rev John Holbrook, Bishop of Brixworth; the Rt Rev Jonathan Meyrick, Bishop of Lynn; the Rt Rev Adrian Newman, Bishop of Stepney; the Rt Rev Jonathan Clark, Bishop of Croydon; the Rt Rev Dr Edward Condry, Bishop of Ramsbury; the Rt Rev Glyn Webster, Bishop of Beverley; the Rt Rev Dr Helen-Ann Hartley, Bishop of Ripon; the Rt Rev Graham Usher, Bishop of Dudley; the Rt Rev Richard Jackson, Bishop of Lewes; the Rt Rev Paul Ferguson, Bishop of Whitby; the Rt Rev Dr John Thomson, Bishop of Selby; the Rt Rev David Court, Bishop of Grimsby; the Rt Rev Roger Morris, Bishop of Colchester; the Rt Rev David Williams, Bishop of Basingstoke; the Rt Rev Dr Jonathan Gibbs, Bishop of Huddersfield; the Rt Rev Dr Toby Howarth, Bishop of Bradford; the Rt Rev Philip North, Bishop of Burnley; the Rt Rev Rod Thomas, Bishop of Maidstone; the Rt Rev Dr Graham Tomlin, Bishop of Kensington; the Rt Rev Rod Wickham, Bishop of Edmonton; the Rt Rev Anne Hollinghurst, Bishop of Aston; the Rt Rev Jan McFarlane, Bishop of Repton; the Rt Rev Mark Tanner, Bishop of Berwick; the Rt Rev Robert Springett, Bishop of Tewksbury; the Rt Rev Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, Bishop of Loughborough*