£1.3m claimed by Peers who've failed to speak in the past year

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- **Statement from the Electoral Reform Society for IMMEDIATE RELEASE, 07/09/2015**
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The Electoral Reform Society has today released research showing that Peers who have failed to speak in the past year in the House of Lords have claimed nearly £1.3m in allowances and expenses.

As Parliament returns from summer recess, the Society has revealed that 30 Peers also failed to speak during the whole of the last Parliament – yet claimed over three quarters of a million pounds - while £830,418 has been claimed by those who've failed to speak since the start of the 2014 Parliamentary session.

The research follows David Cameron's announcement of dozens of new Peers at the end of August, and a new report from the Electoral Reform Society [1] showing the amount claimed by Peers who fail to vote in the Lords.

Key Findings:

- **£1,262,670 has been claimed by Peers who have failed to speak in the past year**
- **£772,719 was claimed in expenses and allowances by the 30 Peers who failed to speak during the whole of the last Parliament [2]**
- **116 Peers in total have failed to speak once since the start of the 2014 Parliamentary session**
- **£830,418 has been claimed by those who've failed to speak since the start of the 2014 Parliamentary session**
- **55 Peers who failed to speak in the last session voted fewer than five times, claiming £92,075**
- **Eight Peers who failed both to speak and vote in the last Parliamentary session (2014-2015) claimed £29,812**

Katie Ghose, Chief Executive of the Electoral Reform Society, said:

"These figures show that the House of Lords is well and truly bust. That Peers who failed to speak in the chamber during the whole of the last Parliamentary session claimed three quarters of a million pounds in expenses and allowances is a damning indictment on the 'upper' chamber.

"Almost £100,000 of that was claimed by Peers who voted fewer than five times, while just eight Peers claimed £30,000 - despite not voting or speaking at all in the last session. This is a national scandal, and the sooner we sort out this mess the better.

"The case is now stronger than ever for serious reform of Britain's unelected upper chamber - a chamber that is spiralling out of control, both in terms of size and cost. Rather than spending over a million pounds on Peers who fail to even speak up in Parliament, we need a fairly-elected upper House.

"The fact that Peers can claim thousands without even speaking or voting in the House highlights the reality that there is no accountability for Peers – the public can't kick them out if they fail to serve the interests of citizens.

"We urgently need to fix this broken House before the situation gets any worse.

"David Cameron announced 45 new Peers at the end of August, swelling our already bloated upper chamber to over 800 members – an absolutely outrageous situation which will do nothing for people's faith in politics.

"The Prime Minister says he regrets not reforming the chamber in the last Parliament. Given these new findings, now is the time to act on that and get on with the vital work of ensuring we have a democratic upper House, where the public finally get a say."

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Methodology and Notes

[1] Read about the report here: http://electoral-reform.org.uk/blog/its-official-house-lords-completely-bust and read the full publication here:

[2] The ERS went through Parliamentary speaking records using the website They Work For You. The research looked at spoken contributions on the House of Lords floor, up to August 2015. Written questions/answers, exclamations ('My Lords – ') and committee attendance were not recorded. This data was then compared to voting and expenses records taken from the House of Lords itself. Note: the 2014-2015 expenses figures only go up until the end of February, as the latest figures (March) were not available when the research was undertaken.

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